

GRAIL

THAT GOD MAY BE GLORIFIED IN ALL THINGS

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THIS MONTH your GRAIL is packed with information. Since February is Catholic Press Month, most of the information is about books and magazines. If you like pictures, the best place to start is in the center of this issue, where you will find the article on the printing of the GRAIL **ONCE A MONTH**. For a brief but complete statement on what **CATHOLIC LITERATURE** really is try the article by that name. Then, if you have anything to do with the education of children, you won't want to miss **BOOKS TO GROW UP ON**. While we are on the subject of books we would like to call your attention to our monthly review of the current **BOOKS**. It has been said that one of the best ways to keep up with the developments of this fast-moving world is to read book reviews. You can be sure that time spent in reading our reviews will not be wasted, since it is our policy to consider only those books which we feel are worthy of the attention of Christian families. These reviews can also serve as a guide in buying books for your family or friends. Last, but best in this issue, there is the second article in our series on the family sacramentals, **CHILDREN ARE THE FRUIT OF LOVE**. Last warning: don't miss **PRECIOUS CONTRABAND**. God bless you all . . . and good reading.

— Father Walter, O.S.B.

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Walter Sullivan, O. S. B.
as told to Frances King

Children may be considered as the fruit of love, or as hindrances to freedom depending upon whether the parents have been united as "children of saints" or as "heathen that know not God"

Children Are the Fruit of Love

ANN had just shocked her fifteen-year-old girl friends. They had told her it was brazen to say such things—to admit having such an ambition. And Ann frankly didn't understand why.

When I heard her story I was glad that she couldn't understand why they were shocked, and I hoped that she never would. All she had told her friends was that some day she wanted to get married because she wanted to have children—four of them—two boys and two girls.

I hoped with all my heart that Ann *would* marry some day, for to her, children would be the fruit of love and not mere hindrances.

to parties, new dresses, or new houses. I hoped that she wouldn't lose her vision about the purpose of marriage, because I knew she would be the sort of young woman who would wrap the family sacramentals of Mother Church protectively around her and her family. I think she would approach marriage as a young man approaches ordination to the priesthood. She would foresee its trials and its sufferings as well as its pleasures and consolations. And she would embrace it, not for the sake of the pleasures alone, but because she desired to offer herself to God as an instrument for peopling His heaven.

She would suffer to have her children. She would suffer to rear them as Christians. And, yes, she probably would suffer in her old age at being bruised by them. It would be her life's work, though, which she had done for God's sake and for love's sake. Her children would be the harvest which she would lay at God's feet as the fruit of her love for Him and for her husband.

The Church always has held out the protective cloak of her sacramentals to newly married couples in the hope that they might understand at the beginning of their new life that their homes are to be sacred workshops of God and should be kept as holy as convents—that they might realize that their bodies which co-operate with God to bring new life into the world are sanctified for that purpose by marriage—just as the priest's hands are consecrated for Mass—and that they might offer their sufferings and sacrifices of rearing a family to God as contritely as the strictest monk offers his penances.

Just as all things which belong to God's house are blessed, consecrated vessels, so should be the bodies, the home, and the nuptial chamber of the newly wed. If the activities which are to be

carried on in their new life are to give honor and glory to God, they should all be blessed by Him. And so, the Church does not unite a couple, bless them at the nuptial Mass, and then stand like a prude at the altar while they proceed alone to make their new home. The Church is not a prude; many of her children are. Through ignorance, or prudery, many of them shut her out of their new home and out of their nuptial chamber. They bid her stay at the altar and wait there until they seek her again on Sunday. They want to be alone—and so they bid Christ, the Silent Partner of their marriage, to be quiet, and they ignore the blessing which would reassure them of His interest in the partnership.

At the altar they have been reminded of their duties to one another. These duties are not all physical, not all material. The most important duty is spiritual: to help each other become saints. If they fail in that, then they have failed in everything. With that duty foremost in mind, it would be well if every couple, approaching the beginning of their married life, could be confronted with the words of Tobias to his newly wed Sara:

"Sara, arise, and let us pray.... For we are the children of saints,

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and we must not be joined together like heathens that know not God." (*Tobias 8, 4-5*)

Tobias had been instructed on the difference between such unions by the archangel Raphael. Sara had been betrothed seven times before and each time her husband had died, killed by the devil, as her husband and she approached the nuptial chamber. Tobias feared that he would meet a similar fate, and he asked the archangel how to escape the power of the devil. The instructions of the archangel to Tobias are still good counsel:

"They who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves, and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power.... Thou shalt take the virgin with the fear of the Lord, moved rather for love of children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayst obtain a blessing in children." (*Tobias 6, 17.22*)

When one reflects upon the evils which have cursed the family through the abuse of the nuptial chamber, one can come to better understand why Mother Church wishes to hover over that room with a special blessing as the couple starts life together.

If they will invite her in, the blessing which she asks upon them is this:

"Bless, O Lord, the bed chamber. Let all who dwell in it stand firm in Thy peace and may they persevere in obedience to Thy will; may they see many years and a numerous posterity and finally attain to the kingdom of heaven. Amen."

Upon the new structure into which eventually will come new souls to work out their eternal salvation, the Church also asks a blessing for all the things which so many homes today are ceasing to be. If couples are to help each other become saints—and their children with them—then all the things which they do together must have God's blessing. They must seek it, not only at Sunday Mass, but in their home, in their love for each other, and in their children, so that eventually their household will be so permeated with God's love that it will reflect peace into a peace-hungry world.

Mother Church is anxious to follow couples into their new houses and to ask God to help them make the structures into homes. Her blessing for a home is:

"Bless, O Lord, God Almighty, this place, that they may abide here in health, purity, victory, strength, humility, goodness, and meekness, the fulfillment of

the law, and thanksgiving to God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and may this blessing remain over this place and on all those who dwell here now and forever. Amen."

Within every human being is an urge to create, which may manifest itself in works of art, music, literature, inventions, or craftsmanship. But the greatest of all creative powers is the creation of new life—a new body with an immortal soul which will outlive the greatest works any man ever produced. It is significant that God has ordained that into the intimate expression of the love of man for wife He would pour the most wonderful of His creations—the immortal human soul—to be housed in a temple built and shaped by the expression of love. Into the hands of those who have appeared before Him and offered themselves as His instruments of procreation, God has entrusted this creative power which He might well have reserved for Himself alone.

But in His own great love, God wanted man to know the joy, the satisfaction of having created something out of love—something after one's own image and likeness. If man wants to use this power of procreation, it must be asked from God; it must be

granted by God. God's true authority comes only to those who appear before His altar and pledge their lives to Him as instruments through whom he may people heaven if He sees fit.

When the young mother finds herself with child, the feeling of shame should be as remote to her as it would be to a farmer gazing at a field full of ripe wheat waving in the autumn wind and glistening in the sunshine. The farmer's heart is not ashamed. His face is radiant and the sight fills his heart with humility and gratitude. He planted his field with faith and he accepts his bountiful harvest as God's love.

And so, when faith and love have borne their fruit in the young mother, she too should turn to God in thanksgiving. There she will find Mother Church waiting to visit her home and pray with her "that by the firmness of her faith she may be protected from every evil."

The liturgy blesses the mother and the growing life within her. It also blesses the home, praying that the angels may dwell therein and watch over the mother and child. There is hardly a time when she will appreciate such a blessing more than during pregnancy, when she is filled with hope and also with fear, with joy as well as sorrow.

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The blessing for
an expectant mother

V. Our help is in the name of the Lord.
R. Who made heaven and earth.
V. Help Thy handmaid
R. O my God, who trusts in Thee.
V. Be for her, O Lord, a strong tower
R. Against the enemy.
V. Let the enemy not prevail over her.
R. And the son of iniquity not hurt her.
V. Send her, O Lord, help from Thy sanctuary
R. And protect her from Sion.

Let us pray.

Lord God, Creator of the universe, Thou art strong and fear-provoking, just and merciful; Thou art good and gracious; Thou hast freed Israel from all trials; Thou hast made our fathers Thy favorites; Thou hast sanctified them through the hand of Thy Spirit; Thou hast prepared body and soul of the Blessed Virgin Mary through the co-operation of the Holy Spirit as a dignified dwelling for Thy Son; Thou hast filled John the Baptist with the Holy Spirit and made him rejoice for this in his mother's womb: Receive the offering of a contrite heart and the burning desire of Thy handmaid N.,

who in humility prays for the thriving of the child, which Thou hast entrusted to her womb. Care for what is thine and protect it against all persecution and spite of the enemy. Thy merciful hand lend her help, so that the young life will safely come to see the light of the world, and be saved for the sacred birth of Baptism. May it always serve Thee and gain eternal life. Through Christ our Lord. R. Amen.

The expectant mother is sprinkled with holy water, and Psalm 66 is said.

V. Let us praise the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.
R. Let us praise and exalt Him in eternity.
V. His angels has He given command for your sake,
R. That they may protect you on all your ways.

Let us pray.

Visit, we beseech Thee, O Lord, this house and drive away from it and from this Thy servant N. all snares of the enemy; let Thy holy Angels dwell therein and protect the mother and her child in peace and may Thy blessing remain with her forever. Save them, O almighty God, and grant unto them Thy perpetual light. Through Christ our Lord.

It should indeed be difficult to forsake a Church that follows her children and stays with them in their most difficult hours, watching over them with maternal care. It would be difficult if her sacramentals were known to families and used as naturally in the events of their lives as they once were used. These beautiful traditions and ceremonies were not academically studied and forced into the regular pattern of family living. They came forth organically from the life of the Church, giving grace and peace to those who united the joy and sorrow of their family life with God. But as the world has reverted toward pagan marriages, which first seek companionship, pleasures, riches, and convenient living, the sacramentals which regard children as the rightful fruit of marriage have been almost forgotten.

If Ann's little friends had

known the liturgy of their Church, they indeed would have been shocked—at their own attitude and not at Ann's. It is as unnatural for a couple to present themselves to God in marriage and not expect—or not want—children, as it is to plant bulbs and never long for their flowers. For love which seeks nothing but its own pleasure in marriage is no love at all—is no marriage at all. Love is sacrificing—as the plant sacrifices its energy for the beauty of the blossom. Without the sacrifice, it can have no real maturity because it is all vine, consuming all the food and energy for itself. And it will die consumed by itself, leaving no traces of love, for it bore no fruit—it left no seed.

The full text for the blessing of an expectant mother, printed on a card and suitable for mailing as a greeting, may be obtained from the Pio Decimo Press, P.O. 53, Baden Station, St. Louis 15, Mo.

OF WHAT great assistance could be the press, the radio and the cinema and how great is their responsibility with regard to the family! Should not the cinema in fact, instead of debasing itself in the intrigues of divorce and separation, place itself in the service of the unity of marriage, of conjugal fidelity, the well-being of the home and the soundness of the family? People feel the need of a better and a higher conception of domestic life. The unexpected success of certain recent films is sufficient proof of this."

Pope Pius XII to a pilgrimage of the French Union of Family Organizations

Precious Contraband

Lucy
Schwarzrock

It is June, 1926. Vivacious young Mainka has come from America to visit her Russia birthplace. She is appalled to discover the misery and terror of her peasant relatives, crushed under the Communist regime. Mainka's distress is further complicated by her falling completely in love with one of her childhood companions, Constantine Riba. They are secretly married by a fugitive priest, but Constantine insists that Mainka shall return to America after two months. A government official has just arrived and is subjecting Constantine to a ruthless cross-examination.

FOR several minutes Mainka stood there motionless. She felt terrified at the news and sensed her helplessness. Of a sudden an idea suggested itself to her. Turning, she ran into Auntie's house to splash water into a basin, to scrub hurriedly her face and neck, arms and feet. She slipped red sandals on her bare feet, no time for stockings now. Over a fresh white slip she drew a cotton dress of red and white checks with cool white trim. She combed her boyish bob, deftly pushing into place the front side-strands that curled upward against each

cheek. A powder puff and lipstick, a touch of perfume and she was on her way out only to be stopped by Auntie just entering, demanding in alarm, "Where are you going?"

"To corner the lion in his den," she answered trying to push past.

But Auntie detained her. "God forbid! You cannot meddle with a Bolshevik!"

"God forbid that he should try to meddle with me, an American," she retorted and was past Auntie and across the road. Without knocking she entered the Riba *isba*. Both men turned quickly, the stranger shouting, "Stay out!" before seeing who it was that dared enter. But the command died upon his mustache-sheltered lips which gradually relaxed in an insinuating smile. He sprang from the chair to stand beside Constantine. "Ah, the American!" He said it as a compliment and bowed from the waist. "Your humble servant, Igor Igorivitch Polokin." He was built very much like Constantine. And yet he was not like him at all; a coarse brutishness coated him, very much as slime seeps from a wet log.

But Mainka came forward in her very sweetest manner, extending a hand, smiling, exclaiming, "I've been hoping for an opportunity to know a member of this wonderful Soviet government. I'm delighted that you should favor our *sialo* with your visit right now while I'm here." Turning to Constantine she chided, "Why have you never told me that there was such an influential government official right near?"

To the other she said, "You come from Kraslava, I presume?"

"I am stationed there at the present, yes," he said and offered her his chair.

They talked, and her words were mostly praises of the Soviet system, the workers of the land, and the wonderfully promising crops of this village. She was saying effusively, "And the potatoes! You should see how large they are already."

"So," said Polokin spreading an ingratiating smile all over his face, "you have been treated to our delicious new potatoes?"

"Oh no!" she denied, immediately sensing the trap set to discover the sabotage of harvesting a crop before the legitimate season. "Oh no! I haven't tasted any! But . . ." she glanced down at her hands and glad the evidence of her work still lingered behind

the fingernails she had not taken the time to clean. She held them toward him with an apologetic laugh, "I just came from the potato patch where I was helping my aunt. It was necessary to hill the potatoes high because they are so large they are pushing up out of the soil."

"Ah," purred Polokin with a gleam in the eye that had not missed a single graceful gesture nor failed to see her youthful loveliness, "perhaps you will do me the honor of showing me these so bountiful potatoes?"

"With pleasure," cried Mainka quickly, eagerly, glad to take him out of this house. "I'm proud of Aunt and Uncle's work. Such wonderful farmers they are! You will see!" She started for the door, but he was there ahead of her, opening it, bowing from the waist, elegant courtier out to charm the fair lady. He offered his arm.

Behind them Constantine cried a warning, "Mainka!" but she did not deign to acknowledge his presence with so much as a glance. She was smiling into Polokin's oily face, slipping her hand lightly within the crook of his arm, crossing the threshold and the road.

"Shall we walk?" smirked Polokin. Then he added with seeming apology as Mainka glanced wistfully towards the *brichka*, "The

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horse and *brickha* would trample down our precious crops."

"Certainly we can walk." She accepted this alternative casually. "Didn't I just walk from there?" Most of the way to the potato patch Mainka kept up a bubbling flow of talk. "I marvel at this new regime," she said. "It fascinates me. You members of the governing party have shown exceeding efficiency and wisdom. To export so much grain from Russia—from Russia, which used to be so backward in world trade under the czars! How do you do it?" She looked up into his face with apparent admiration.

He preened himself. "Planning and a firm hand are what does it. We Party men have firm hands." With his free hand he pressed hers where it lay upon his arm, as if to give her a sample of his superb strength.

But Mainka knew how to master the situation. "And the planning?" she asked. "Who does the planning?" Her voice was calm and impersonal.

"That, my dear American, is the work of our great and beloved father and leader, Stalin. His five-year plan. Ah, there is our holy machine for reaping miraculous harvests!" Polokin pressed Mainka's hand again.

But Mainka quickly withdrew her hand and gestured toward the

fields of rye. "How these muzhiks can raise a crop like that without machines is a miracle to me. Why, in America they would say it's impossible without machines! But then," she added with a derogatory, apologetic shrug, "I guess maybe in America we've all grown soft beneath that rotten capitalism."

He gave her a searching look as if surprised that an American should speak this way.

"Well, yes," she insisted, "we are soft. I've never seen anyone work so hard as these wonderful relatives of mine here in this village. With their bare hands they do work which we in America would not attempt without machines."

"Ah, machines," said Polokin. "We have them too, the very latest models. We value them highly, and we use them only where we have trained mechanics to run them. On our collective farms."

"Oh, yes, the collectives. I've read marvelous accounts of them—in America, even. Why only recently I was asking . . ." She almost said she had been asking Constantine why he didn't join them, but she must keep Polokin's suspicious thoughts from Constantine. She amended, "I was urging one of my people to join the collectives."

"You know," he said admiringly, "you would make a splendid Communist."

But when he would have recaptured her hand, she bent down to a potato plant, pulling some weeds in a row which had not yet been tended. Pointing to an exposed potato she exclaimed, "See? Didn't I tell you they're large?" Carefully she brushed back the soil. "Isn't that large for this time of year? And I've seen bigger ones."

"Splendid, splendid," agreed Polokin, "but do not soil your pretty hands. Come, let us stroll through the woods."

Mainka cast a quick glance toward the village, thinking wishfully of the venerable driver who might have taken them for a safe ride in the carriage. However, a stroll would keep Polokin out of the village; silently she implored all her favorite saints to protect her and turned meekly toward the wood. When Polokin would have caught her hand, she stooped to pull another weed, then, straightening up, she continued to walk briskly along.

Polokin laughed. His sensual eyes were aflame. "Ah, but you are beautiful," he exclaimed. "Never have I had the friendship of so charming a lady."

She said quickly, "Those collect-

ive farms you spoke of—I wish I could see one. It would be a shame to go back to America without having seen one of your wonderful communes." In spite of her assumed calm, she felt helpless. The woods seemed dark and sinister, their peace gone.

"Why, of course you shall see one. I personally will take you through a fine commune any day you wish. All you need to do is to call on me." He described the advantages of collectivism with all his superlative adjectives.

They walked in silence for a moment. Mainka knew she could not continue to check Polokin unless she kept talking.

"Tell me," she blurted out suddenly, "what are the chances for an American to marry a Russian?"

Polokin stopped abruptly, startled.

"I mean," Mainka hastened to explain, "if the American came here to live."

Polokin slowly began to walk again. "I suppose that you are referring to your lover, Constantine."

Her heart pounded. So Aunt Helka had been right. Her love for Constantine was on trial here. She felt cornered and helpless till sudden anger flared within her; she was an American, with a free

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woman's right to marry whom she would.

Mainka stopped short and faced Polokin. She played her hand boldly. "Constantine? My lover? Are you insinuating that I should have taken that muzhik for a lover?" She tossed her head disdainfully, wrinkling her pert nose. "I wouldn't stoop so low!"

It was easy to give her words a ring of truth, for she certainly would not have lived with Constantine as a mere lover. She resumed her steps along the cow-path that led toward the village.

Polokin was baffled by her continuous, varied bursts of words. And Mainka knew it. "I'm a Russian, like you," Mainka went on. "American, yes, but Russian first and always. Russia fascinates me. I love her with a burning affection that will never let me forget her wherever I go. Wouldn't you say, then, you yourself," she turned to him as to a sage, "wouldn't you say that Russia is the place for me?"

After a minute's uncertainty he exclaimed, "But certainly! I salute you as an extremely intelligent woman." Seizing her hand, he kissed it, and though she was hurrying along he still retained it in his grasp. He poured out a sparkling outline of a future for her. "You would find a wonderful

place for yourself in the Party. You could serve... Ah, yes, there is an ideal place for you—for you, with your beauty, your captivating personality, your knowledge of the world!" He was exuding flattering adjectives, underscoring each word with ardent glances and caressing manner. "You would easily win a place as a leading, fine G.P.U. lady to be dressed in jewels, silks, and furs, to live in the best hotels, meeting and mingling with our wealthy foreign visitors." He paused only to turn to her and catch her in his arms. "But ah, I would not like that! I should want you for myself alone. Already I love you as my life. Beautiful, lovable, exciting one!"

She seemed to yield to his fawning embrace, her body momentarily limp against his, but on a sudden, saving thought, she sprang back, exclaiming accusingly, "But you're already married!" It was only a stab in the dark, but the way his hands released her, and the surprise that rushed across his face confirmed her words. While he stood there gaping, she tossed her head as in anger and hurried down the road toward the village.

He caught up with her, pleading, "But that is a small matter. Do you think that slattern can hold me, now that I have met you? Never! Tomorrow I shall

register the liquidation of our marriage."

"Tomorrow!" She flung it at him as if tomorrow were a hundred years away. "But this is today!" All the while, her feet went faster, faster, faster, striving to gain the opening in full view of the village where surely he would cease his advances.

"Ah, yes," he agreed, "I too would long to claim you today. But, for me, tomorrow is worth waiting for, with you in my heart."

"Tomorrow?" She changed her tactics with the sly quickness of a vixen and flung the question with a sneering glance. "Tomorrow! Do you think I'm so easily won? Do you suppose I come running at the first crook of a man's finger?" Her feet moved ever more quickly, nearly running now, till the bright sunlight touched her face, the blue sky was overhead, the village was before them.

"But you will come to my office?" he begged. "So I can show you our collectives?"

She almost laughed in his face. "Oh, yes!" She could afford to walk slower now, as if yielding to his pleading. "That's right. You were going to show me the work at the collectives."

"When?"

"After I leave the village, when I'm ready to go sight-seeing, I'll

call on you." But she never intended to be ready.

When they reached the village Polokin climbed into the *brichka* and drove away, without so much as a word to the villagers.

★ ★ ★

Keeping their rendezvous, Constantine slipped in to her sleeping quarters which Auntie had arranged in Uncle's haymow weeks ago for better security. Mainka asked quickly, "Where were you staying when Polokin finally left the village? I looked for you afterward, and no one knew where you'd gone."

"Where do you think? In the woods."

"In the woods?" Exclaiming, she sat up to peer at him through the half-darkness of a moonlit night.

"Noo da. Do you think I would leave you to stroll alone with that Bolshevik beast?"

She thought about it and then giggled. "Well, what did you see?"

"I saw a pure, white dove keep a slobbering beast at bay! Oh, the power of the pure of heart!" He caught her to him, covering her face with kisses.

Softly, then, he whispered, "Two beautiful months of honeymoon! No man in the world has had such happiness as mine. One

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more night and you will be leaving. Though it saddens me, I am relieved because in a little while you will be across the border into freedom again. Safe. My beloved will be safe. Next week you will be eating good white bread, and butter, and eggs, and meat. And you need it. I have seen you growing pale, day by day. Already the dance has fled from your step, the sparkle from your eyes."

"Aunt Zocia noticed those things, too, and spoke to me." She snuggled against him and whispered with sure satisfaction, "You can't send me away now." She said it with finality. "We're having a baby."

A moment of stillness before he exclaimed joyously, "My wife! It is more than I hoped. A son! To know I shall have a son!"

She repeated, "Now I must stay here. That's settled, isn't it?"

His body was suddenly rigid beside her. "Stay? Are you mad? Keep our son here for the Bolshevik to twist to his own pattern? What are you thinking?"

She was silent. Then she decided to play her last card. In a cool, determined murmur she told him, "There is one thing I can do, and you will never be able to send me out of Russia. I can

go to the authorities and renounce my allegiance to the United States. I can become a Russian citizen."

Constantine sucked in his breath. Then he began, speaking quietly, slowly, with the inner conviction she had heard from him before. "No, my dove, you will not do that. You are merely being an impulsive child at the moment. Impulse has no place in Russia, not among us, the downtrodden. Every step we take must be careful, deliberate, and leading to the necessary end. It is time for you, too, to leave behind the irresponsible ways of childhood."

While common sense told her he was right, love refused to admit that their separation was inevitable.

He continued, "And supposing you stayed? How long do you think you would remain my wife? Mine alone, that is? How many days, think you, till Polokin would come slinking around to take you to 'see the collectives'?" Do not think, my love, that it was your beautiful virtue alone that saved you from him. Today the impregnable stockade around you is your American citizenship; renounce that, and you are immediately at the mercy of a thousand Polokins."

A pause, and then he resumed, "You are an adult with a child to consider. Or have the luxuries of your land so drugged you with ease that you have lost the natural instincts of a mother?" He sat up, hands clenched.

Beside him she moaned, knowing that there was a new love being born. She pressed her face against his shoulder. "Constantine, I'm being torn to pieces!"

He kissed her and rocked her gently in his arms though his voice went on relentlessly. "How many times have you insisted that you will add your sacrifice to Russia's? Now I give you a real sacrifice to make." He held her motionless, and his calm, blue eyes gazed deep into hers. "You will go, my beloved," he said.

Silence. Then she accepted the inevitable.

"Yes, I'll go." She swallowed a sob. "But I'll leave my heart in Russia."

With approval he repeated, "A heart crying to heaven for us! There is no sacrifice more precious than that."

The minutes slipped by quietly. Then suddenly, shockingly, the silence was split by a burst of Constantine's exultant laughter. The laughter of a large Russian shouting defiance into the teeth of the enemy, it rolled like a cataract into the startled night.

"Hush," Mainka cried quickly, alarmed, shaking his shoulder, "You'll wake the whole village!"

With effort he held the exploding hilarity down in his throat. At last he managed to speak, "I am the luckiest man in Russia!" He paused and chuckled deeply at his far-reaching thoughts. "We will smuggle my son out of this death house." He sprang to his feet, catching her up like a child in his arms, swinging her as he spun in a circle. "He will cross the border right under the commissar's nose! And no Bolshevik will think to stop him."

★ ★ ★

And Constantine was right. The next week Mainka was aboard ship, taking Constantine's child to America.

The End

*Are you looking for something
to read aloud to the children?*

Try THE MEDAL on page 18 of this issue.

The following article was given originally as a paper at Yankton, S.D., last summer. Read it carefully. You will not only be broadening your concept of what a good book is, but you will be developing an appreciation for

Catholic Literature

Before we can speak of loving literature, before we can speak of appreciating literature, we must have some definite understanding of what we mean by Catholic literature. We must get away from too narrow a definition of it, for the scope of Catholic literature is as vast as human nature. A Catholic book is a good book. It is one in which we find in the story, in the characters, in the whole thing as it moves along, reasons to see human nature as something God created and redeemed, something in which we must have faith, and for which we must have hope and charity.

We read because we have to read or because we wish to do so. We read books for the pleasure they give us and for some lasting worth called wisdom or learning.

Good books give us both pleasure and worth simultaneously. A good book sends the reader away richer for having read it. It follows, then, that the growth we get from a good

book must ultimately be a growth in God's love.

Already in the 4th Century B.C., Aristotle, the Greek philosopher and thinker, maintained that good literature

"imitates" nature not by slavishly copying it, but by divining the end toward which nature is working in some particular instance and by realizing or illustrating that operation in another medium. (It) deals with the very stuff of life, takes up some incident from it (life), and makes explicit the end and the principles inherent in that incident by excluding the uncertainty and incompleteness which envelop it in real life.¹

Good literature shows what men "ought" to be rather than only what they really are.

It is possible for a good writer to picture vice. In fact, if he is sincere in portraying life as it is lived, he will find it impossible to avoid the

¹ Quoted by Harold C. Gardiner, S.J., "Common Literary Principles," *America*, Sept. 28, 1946.

portrayal of sin and vice. But, in treating of vice, a writer of good literature *must present it as vice*. In so doing he will somehow have flashed the picture upon a background which reveals how life *ought to be lived*. Actions will be represented so that the principles which are being violated by that which is morally bad, or illuminated by that which is morally good, take shape and body on the canvas upon which the actions are projected.

A good writer pictures not only that which an individual man accomplishes; he gives his reader also an understanding of that to which man, *as man*, aspires. Perhaps the poet, Browning, was very close to enunciating a good principle for the writer of Catholic literature when he wrote:

"The low man seeks a little
thing to do,
Sees it and does it:
The high man with a great
thing to pursue,
Dies ere he knows it."
or...
"What I aspired to be,
And was not, comforts me."

Literature re-enacts life in such a way that it criticizes life on a moral basis. That is why, fundamentally, all great literature is religious literature. In a sense, even a story like *Huckleberry Finn* is religious literature. It is the story of a boy's search, in a boy's terms, for happiness. Huck's conceptions of happiness are dim, and funny, and

foolish, but in real life he would probably have grown out of his hazy notion of happiness.²

A piece of good literature interprets life for us. It somehow makes sense out of life, even those portions of it which, in our own experiences, seem tangled and unintelligible.

In so doing, a piece of good literature will provide us with growth in terms of God's love. It will enable us to see and realize the workings of God's love. For example, a book that portrays sin, and gives us an understanding of sin and a turning away from sin as forcibly as does *Brideshead Revisited* (in Julia's sin, understanding of it, and turning from it)—such a book gives us a taste of God's love.

God's love is pre-eminently a law of faith, hope, and charity. We leave a good book imbued with all three or at least one of these virtues. A good book can—without even mentioning God *per se*—make the human aspects of faith, hope, and charity deeper in us. In other words, if I read a *good* book I will somehow have strengthened these powers whereby I live the divine life on earth.

After having read a book like *The World, the Flesh, and Father Smith*, I know that human nature is a good thing. I know that, not because Marshall has shown the problem of life tinged with much that is not good, but because my faith in the Redemption has been augmented. I come away from such a book with

² *Ibid.*, Oct. 5, 1946.

my faith in man's goodness—his goodness which is a result of the Redemption—increased.

A good book also speaks of hope. Necessarily is this true. All great books concern conflict. Conflict presupposes hope. In portraying hope inherent in conflict a good book is giving us a true picture of life and increasing our own hope by making us see clearly that human nature does not give up so easily.

It is pre-eminently the function of a good book to increase true supernatural charity in its reader. If a book stirs up my emotions and imagination to a realization that there is some heroism in the weakest of men, and some weakness in the most heroic, then I am seeing men as God sees them. He sees them to love them because He sees something of

His own infinite perfections mirrored in every one of them. If literature is good, then it helps me to see men in the light of Charity, and to love them.

The most perfect imitation achieved in literature or in any fine art will be an imitation of man's actions, passions, and thoughts as they are well ordered. This being true, the story of a life lived in total correspondence with the grace of God, a life full of thrilling adventure to which the soul can be spurred by grace, is the most perfect literature. Might this not account for the avidity with which we read *The Seven Storey Mountain*?

A piece of good literature is an open door through which truth passes to greet us, and through which we return to adore its Author.



Wise words about prayer and work

"What this world needs is cleaner minds and dirtier fingernails."

—Will Rogers

"If you are too busy to pray, you are too busy."—Anon.

"All great work must rise like the Temple of Solomon—without sound of axe and hammer."—Francis Thompson

"It is not a waste of time to take time out for God, but it is the business of all business."—St. Bernard.

"Then there was the one who prayed—"Lord, don't send anything You and I can't handle...."—Anon.

The Medal

by Mary Fabyan Windeatt

A novice for only three months at the motherhouse of the daughters of Charity, in Paris, France, Sister Catherine Labouré is favored with a vision of the Blessed Virgin. The Blessed Mother tells Catherine of the troubled future in store for the Church in France. Sister Labouré speaks of the vision to the convent chaplain, Father Aladel. The chaplain tells her she must have dreamed the whole incident, and advises her to forget all about it. Sister Labouré promises to try.

CHAPTER 3

OF COURSE Father Aladel did not mean to be unkind to Sister Labouré. However, he realized only too well that sometimes good people, even very good people, believe that they have seen and heard heavenly things, only to discover later that they have imagined everything. Then, what embarrassment for everyone concerned! What scandal!

To make matters more complicated, this was not the first time that Sister Labouré had come to him with a startling tale. Only three months ago, when she had seen the heart of Saint Vincent de Paul floating in the air over the silver box in the chapel containing his relic! Then, a week or so later, that she had seen Our Lord while assisting at Mass!

"The poor child is trying so hard to be holy that she really believes she has visions," he decided. "The wisest thing to do is to pay no attention to her stories."

Sister Labouré was disappointed in Father Aladel's disbelief in what she told him. But remembering the words of the Blessed Virgin—that in time of trial she was to come before the altar and pour out all her troubles—she did not worry too much.

"Dear Lord, please help me!" she begged, as she knelt before the tabernacle. "And please tell me

what it is that I'm to do for You."

Months went by, and it began to seem as though these prayers were not to be answered. Yet Sister Labouré did not give up hope. What had Our Lady told her on the night of July 18, the eve of the Feast of Saint Vincent de Paul?

"My child, the good God wishes to charge you with a mission. You will have much to suffer, but you will bear it all with the thought that you are doing it for His glory..."

A mission! A special work for souls! Oh, surely the Blessed Virgin herself would come again to explain?

Then suddenly Sister Labouré's hope was rewarded. Late in the afternoon on Saturday, November 27, while she was at meditation with the other religious in the chapel, she heard the same sound which she had heard on that wonderful night more than four months ago: the rustle of silk. Eagerly she looked toward the sanctuary whence it came. Then her heart gave a great leap. There, standing close to a picture of Saint Joseph, and upon what seemed a shining globe, was the Blessed Virgin!

How beautiful she was! Even more beautiful than on her first visit! Her simple, flowing dress resembled the color of the sky at

dawn—a radiant white, shot through with shimmering gold. A white veil covered her head, falling gracefully to her feet, and in her hands she held a small golden ball, surmounted with a cross, which she pressed lovingly to her heart.

Sister Labouré gazed in ecstasy at the marvelous sight, quite heedless of the other Sisters around her. Then suddenly she noticed that the Virgin's fingers were glistening with numerous brilliant rings. The stones in these rings sent forth such dazzling rays that one could scarcely bear to look upon them. Indeed, they enveloped the Blessed Virgin in so much splendor that neither her feet nor her robe could be seen. And yet some of the precious stones were not sending forth any rays....

What did it all mean? Sister Labouré did not even try to understand. It was enough that the Blessed Virgin had come again; that she was standing only a few yards away, her eyes lifted to heaven with an expression of indescribable love. Then suddenly she lowered her eyes and looked directly at Sister Labouré. And though her lips did not move, there was no mistaking the sound of her voice:

"The globe which you see represents the world, especially France, and everyone in it. The

rays are the symbol of the graces I shed on those who ask me for them." Then, after a pause: "The stones which send forth no light represent the graces for which people forget to ask me."

Suddenly the golden ball which the Blessed Virgin was holding vanished. She lowered her hands, and the brilliant rays shone forth with even greater splendor. A moment later an oval frame appeared about her, with an inscription in golden letters: *O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.* Then, to Sister Labouré's astonishment, a heavenly voice spoke within the depths of her own heart:

"Have a medal made after this model," it said. "All who wear it after it has been blessed will receive great graces, especially if they wear it around the neck. Graces will abound for those who wear it with confidence."

Presently the vision seemed to turn around, revealing a letter M, surmounted by a cross and a bar. Beneath the M were the Hearts of Jesus and Mary—the first, crowned with thorns, the other pierced by a sword, and the whole encircled by twelve stars.

Sister Labouré gazed in an ecstasy of joy. To have a medal made like this in honor of the Blessed Virgin! It was the mis-

sion—the special work for souls—which God wanted of her...

CHAPTER 4

POOR Father Aladel was beside himself with worry when he heard the story of Our Lady's second appearance.

"Sister, it couldn't have happened!" he declared emphatically. "It was all a dream like the other time."

But Sister Labouré shook her head with childlike confidence. "Oh, no, Father! I saw the Blessed Virgin as plainly as I see you, for it was still daylight in the chapel. And she wants the medal made right away so that people can wear it and start earning graces."

"But... but that's impossible!"

Sister Labouré looked up in astonishment. "Impossible? But why, Father?"

"Because neither you nor I have the right to undertake such a work."

"But the Blessed Virgin said..."

"Nonsense. Forget the whole thing. Just say your prayers and try to be like the other Sisters. After all, aren't you just a novice?"

"Yes, Father."

"And isn't a novice supposed to do what her Superiors tell her?"

"Oh, yes, Father."

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"Very well, then. Don't let me hear any more about these visions. Or this foolishness about having a special medal made, either. It's dangerous to give your attention to such fancies."

★ ★ *

Obediently Sister Labouré promised to put the thought of Our Lady's visits out of her mind. But a month later she came to Father Aladel, her eyes shining with joy.

"Father, I've seen her again—in the chapel!" she burst out. "And she's really in earnest about having the medal made."

With an effort the young priest controlled his impatience, consoled by the thought that in few weeks Sister Labouré would complete her novitiate at the Motherhouse in Paris and be sent to work in some other convent. What relief to hear no more of these stories!

Nevertheless he realized that he must not be too harsh toward Sister Labouré. After all, she had made a good record as a novice. She was cheerful, hard-working, obedient, trustworthy...

"Well, Sister, if the Blessed Virgin really came again, what did she look like this time?" he asked in a matter-of-fact voice. "And what did she say to you?"

Sister Labouré's heart filled

with happiness. Was Father Aladel beginning to understand at last?

"She seemed to be about forty years old, Father. And just as beautiful as ever, with the rings on her fingers sending out the rays, and her dress—oh, it's impossible to describe it!"

"I suppose it was blue?"

"No, Father. It was white, and very plainly made, but somehow it shone like the sun. And the oval frame was there again, too, with the little prayer inside: *O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.*"

"You saw all this in the chapel?"

"Yes, Father. Only this time it was in a different place."

"Our Lady wasn't sitting in the armchair? Or standing by Saint Joseph's picture?"

"No, this time she passed by Saint Joseph's picture and went up behind the altar to stand above the tabernacle—just as though she were a statue. Then, after a little while..."

"Yes?"

"The whole picture seemed to turn around, just like the other time, and I saw the two hearts."

"One with thorns around it and the other pierced by a sword?"

"Yes, the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Then the twelve stars were

there, too. Oh, Father, you know what this means, don't you?"

"What, Sister?"

"Why, it's the back of the medal! Our Lady is to be on the front, just as I've described her to you—holding out her hands with the rays coming from them. But on the back there are to be the two hearts and the letter M, with the cross and the bar on top. And the twelve stars. Oh, Father! How soon do you think the medal can be ready?"

The priest's heart sank. What a dreadful state of affairs! Because he had refrained from ridiculing the third vision, Sister Labouré seemed to feel that he believed in it. Even worse. She was acting as though he had every intention of having the medal made without delay.

"Sister . . ." he began, then stopped. Something must be done, and at once, otherwise he would have no peace. But what? Then suddenly the answer came.

"Sister, what writing should be put on the back of the medal?" he demanded sharply.

Sister Labouré's eyes opened wide in astonishment. "Writing, Father?"

"Yes. You say the front of the medal has the prayer: *O Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee.* Well, surely there should be another prayer on the back?"

For a moment the young nun was silent. Then she shook her head doubtfully. "I don't think there should be any prayer, Father. At least, I don't remember seeing anything . . ."

Quickly Father Aladel seized his chance. "Well, we can't do a thing about the medal until we're sure—absolutely sure—what the Blessed Virgin wants," he declared. "That's certain. So for the time being we'll not make any plans."

Sister Labouré clasped her hands anxiously. "But Father! How can we find out what the Blessed Virgin wants?"

The priest shrugged his shoulders. "Why, by asking her, of course. The next time she comes."

(To be continued)

"A house filled with children is a house full of life, health, and strength. Its future is assured. It is built on living souls. A house peopled with children is a happy house where characters are forged by contact with each other, where charity becomes a habit of behavior, and so an attitude of mind."

Cardinal Saliège,
in *Who Shall Bear the Flame?*

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Especially for parents with growing children

Books to Grow Up On

by

Marie Bristow

I once read an article by someone who wanted to stress the importance of making friends of books. The writer pointed out a group of books that one could get to know early in life, and other books were mentioned which could accompany a person, as the very cheeriest and best of worth-while companions, through every stage of life—youth, middle age, old age.

Certainly our children need to be brought back to a recognition of the treasured comradeship that may be gained from reading good books. A study made by Dr. Lawrence A. Averill, of State Teachers College, Worcester, Massachusetts, showed that, of 1500 teenagers questioned, twenty-three per cent indicated that their ideals centered on the making of headlines in sports, while fourteen per cent chose a radio or motion picture star as their hero or heroine.

Books can imbue one with a real set of values to cherish. And the stories read need not be drily didactic nor sermonizing. There

can be real joy in reading, and, indirectly, the building up and strengthening of high moral standards.

As Father Francis Beauchesne Thornton writes in his *How to Improve Your Personality by Reading*, "Reading was originally meant to be *knowledgeable pleasure*. It was to *recreate the senses*, but it was also to *enlarge the imagination and give joy to the intellect*."

Obviously, Father Thornton is thinking in terms of the adult reader. But before the adult will have any desire for "knowledgeable pleasure," he will have to grow up on books. The love of books is not something that can be developed after one is already old. On the contrary, as a very wise man said long ago, a child will learn to love books only if he has tumbled about in them a great deal from his earliest years.

If a child sees Mother and Dad reading, and if he hears his brothers and sisters talking about some

story they have read, he will begin to look upon books as a part of living and growing up. And this discovery of the delights of reading can be given to the child even before he himself is able to read. He can be *read to*, to put it awkwardly but plainly. When such a child gets older, he will be ever grateful to the person who took his hand, so to speak, and started him along the literary road of happiness. Such a child must once have been the poet who wrote:

You may have tangible wealth untold;
Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold.
Richer than I, you can never be—
I had a Mother who read to me.

The youngest child can start to relish real literature. If the child's precious sense of wonderment can be nourished with, for example, the richly imaginative "Mother Goose" rhymes, he is well on the way toward a love of books and the development of a non-superficial personality.

There was the little girl, for instance, who was riding in the car with her father. Looking out of the back window, she saw, in all its beauty, the moon beginning to

rise. "Daddy, she said, "is that the moon the cow jumped over?" Certainly the stories this little girl knew, simple as they were, really were alive for her, helping her to look at creation and see it in all its magic charm.

Yes, Mother Goose takes children on some great adventures! The song of birds, the beauty of flowers, the odor of the hay, the very noises of the night, the power of the wind, the twinkling of the stars—all these call the child to study Nature. Let the child grow up on a love of nature, and he will not be far from the love of the Creator of us all.

Someone has said that "a person can be 'successful' without books, he can grow rich without books, he can tyrannize over his fellows without books," but that, without books, "he cannot 'see God,' he cannot live in a present that is charged with the past and pregnant of the future."

If the seed we sow through the flowers of literature grows into ideals of respect for the right things, and if our children are helped through literature to learn what Plato said they should learn, that is, "to feel pain and pleasure at the right things," then we are certainly doing very much to overcome the evil forces that are striving to destroy all values in life.

We still need Tom Sawyer and Peter Pan. We have no particular need for Tarzan and Superman. And if our children can only as yet look at pictures, let us give them picture books that are *not* about vacuum cleaners and steam shovels. Our children are living in a world that is already crushed with the heavy weight of materialism and utilitarianism.

Books fit to grow up on will be books that leave the child enriched for the reading of them. They

will be books that will lead the child to love good and shun evil, books that will bring the child to glow with admiration at God's creation, books that will bring the child to meet life courageously and cheerfully. They will be books that will fill the child with a sense of security that God's in His heaven. And if all is not right with the world, the world—and God—is waiting for a courageous person, like that child to make it so.

Teenagers' Lament

So few people understand us
Why?
They do not know we think deeply
About many things,
Life, death, sin and God.
We reach conclusions, and pattern
Our lives in our own fashion.
We live and love and have our hearts
Broken
And our dreams trampled by
Careless feet.
They think because of fads and slang
We are rattle-brained, but
It is not true!
We will grow to be fine men and women
With good jobs and fine families.
Can't we be gay and carefree now,
Before we are burdened with
Responsibilities?
Can't we sing on a summer's night
And giggle and shout, while we may still be
Excused
For being young?

—Sheila Murnane
from *VISTA*, Oct. 1949

When wise men speak...

The words they speak are sound and true.

... people listen.

The Bishops* have spoken; they say:

The danger to the Christian family
Is more to be feared than the Atom Bomb.

A bomb kills the bodies of many or few
but cannot kill their souls.

A bomb rubs out individuals and groups,

BUT

The forces working against the family
undermine the very foundations of society.

IMPORTANCE OF THE FAMILY

As long as there are families,
there is society,
and there can be a nation,

BUT

Without the family,
no society or state can stand,

BECAUSE

the family is the basic unit of society;
the family comes before every nation or government
In time and necessity.

Nations and governments are founded to protect
the family and family life.

ENEMIES OF THE FAMILY

The forces working against the family
are unseen but real.

The forces that undermine the family
are the very attitudes of the world
toward Life, God, and Man.

* All the Bishops of the American Catholic Hierarchy at their Annual Meeting in Washington, D. C. Nov. 16-18, 1949.

WORLD vs. LIFE

The world uses
a ruler to measure inches and feet,
a thermometer to measure degrees
of heat and cold;
the world is right.

The world uses
time to measure the destiny of man,
material progress to measure true progress;
the world is wrong!

WORLD vs. GOD

The world bows its head at times and says:
"I believe in God."
But the world does not want God
in law,
In affairs of this earth.
The world is irritated when told:
"God has rights—observe them.
God provides—rely on Him."
So—the world does not accept God.

WORLD vs. MAN

"O, you great, big, wonderful man!" says the world.
"You are so strong.
You are so handsome.
You make big buildings, big guns, big planes.

You make such wonderful machines.
At night you are so gay
after your seven-hour day.

Man, as long as you can work hard
and be gay—the Government can use you.

As long as you can work hard,
the Government can use you.

Just so you can work for the Government."

WORLD vs. CHURCH

"Help man, O all ye Churches,"
cries the "pious" world.

"Use no magic; use nothing divine.
Just help the poor;
clothe the naked;
relieve the sick—

**ALL FOR THE GREATER HONOR AND GLORY
of our Government."**

LOGIC.

When four comes after one and two after three,
there is disorder because
one should come first,
then two, then three, then four.

When the Government takes first place and
God, Church and man come behind,
there is disorder because
God holds first place, then His Church.
After that, man, and only then
the Government—to help man to be a man
for God—
AND THAT MAKES FOR ORDER.

MORE LOGIC.

Bread can not come from sawdust.
Fire can not come from water.
Order can not come from disorder.
Peace prosperity and human security can
never come from the attitudes of the world
on God.
on man.
on the church.

Adapted by Simeon Daly, O. S. B.

How many difficulties
could be almost entirely eliminated
by patience

The Divine Physician

Henry Brenner, O. S. B.

TO BE patient means to suffer something that hinders or hurts us, and still retain our self-composure. Our Savior's patience was wonderful; they struck His face and even spat on it. "Then they spat in his face and buffeted him; while others struck his face with the palms of their hands." (Matt. 26, 67)

How many difficulties, with their consequent unpleasantness and discord, could be smoothed over and almost entirely eliminated by patience! But so many of us are so adverse to suffering anything, that we even think it wrong to do so. To put up with another's ill manners seems to us a degradation of our own personality, a weakening of our character. How utterly false! No; patience always elevates us personally and strengthens our character; the only exception is, when patience would mean connivance, that is, a culpable neglect of evident duty. Eli, as we read in Holy Writ, was so patient with his wayward sons, that he did not even

correct them; this was culpable, not virtuous, and God punished him accordingly. Patience, in its virtuous meaning, is something quite different; generally, it is the virtue to be practiced when we are personally offended at something, and where annoyance at it would neither do the offender good nor benefit our own soul.

But we need patience not only with others, we need it also with ourselves. In sickness this is especially true. In the first place, we must avoid fearing sickness too much. A person may become very unhappy and full of nervous anxiety by such an attitude toward the physical vicissitudes of life. If we look back upon our lives, we must acknowledge that very few of the serious illnesses that we thought were going to strike us ever did. And probably the ones that did strike us proved a blessing, not an evil, so that whenever we think of them we simultaneously think of the proverb, " 'Tis an ill wind that blows no man good."

Pains are an asset in our physical account; they tell us in time, if there is any danger ahead. Unless they are severe we may simply observe quietly and wait; if they grow in intensity we may see a physician. If we really become sick we may hope for the best, not the worst. Our faith will help us here above all else. For God is a physician who not only knows just exactly what is the matter with us, but who can so arrange matters that we get just the right remedy. He need not work a miracle to save us, but all He needs to do is to suggest to the physician who has us in charge what medicine

or treatment to give us, and the trouble will soon clear up. Some make the mistake of always expecting a miracle when they pray to God in sickness. What is the use of a miracle when some natural means, which He has already created, can turn the trick? Let us pray for that, and He will not deprive us of it; the box of pills that our human physician prescribes we may then look upon not just as another box of pills, but as a special gift of God Himself, who is both all-knowing and all-powerful, something which cannot be said of any human physician.

A GOOD GREETING IS ABOVE THE BEST GIFT

Janet Kennedy, former Anglican nun, now a convert to Catholicism, who painted the beautiful picture of Our Lady of Fatima that The Grail is selling exclusively, has painted 14 greeting cards for every occasion (Birthday, Feast Day, Get Well, Sympathy, First Mass, and other occasions). Instead of having to go to a religious goods store every time you want to send a card to someone, you can have a box of these cards and envelopes right at home. Also, a box saves you money. Purchased separately they cost fifteen cents each or \$2.10—bought in a box at one time they cost only \$1.00. Order your box of *Cards For Every Occasion* today from The Grail Office, St. Meinrad, Indiana.

For the missal-minded
who go to daily Mass—and wonder

we suggest

THE MASS YEAR, 1950
an ordo in English with
meditations on the offertory chants
of Sundays and some feast days.

{ what feast it is
what Mass is being said
what saint is commemorated

1 copy \$.30
4 copies \$1.00
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Grail Feature

Once a Month

from editor's desk to mailing room

by Eric Lies, O.S.B.

In this day and age, when magazines are printed by the millions in every size and color, a small monthly like the GRAIL is apt to be taken for granted as something that just happens every thirty days. We (the new staff) found out that it is not so simple as all that. We were rather surprised at the work that goes into the making of these sixty-four pages of print and pictures. We thought you might appreciate your magazine more if you knew a little about the making of it.

The heart of the process is the editor's office. Into this small room flow manuscripts from writers all over the country who hope

to find a place in the pages of the magazine. The number of manuscripts submitted is sufficient to keep the editorial staff busy reading and criticizing.

Yes, most of the free-lance articles and stories are rejected. But once in a while something good turns up and it is immediately submitted to the staff for approval and purchase.

When the material for the next issue has been gathered and edited, the editor-in-chief gives it his final once-over. If the story needs a new title or a caption to catch your eye and give you an idea of what it is about, this is the time for the editor to add it.

Linotype Room

Copy into type

The linotype machine casts the type line by line on solid bars of type metal. These bars of type are assembled on long metal trays so that they can be carried to the...

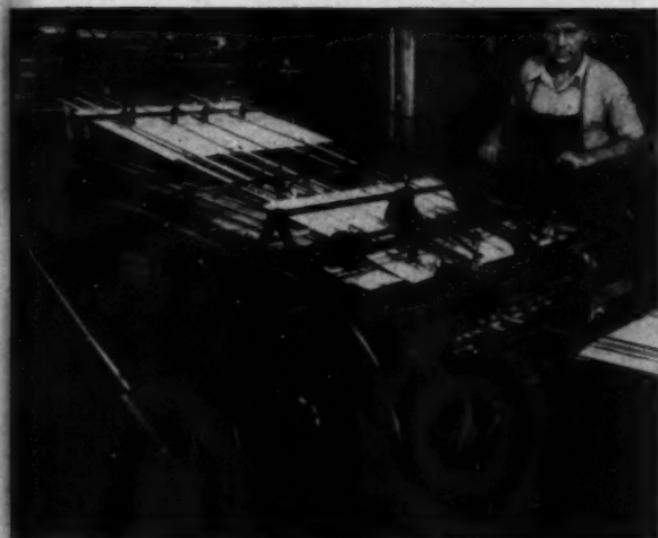


Composing Room

Type into pages

The typesetter arranges the linotype bars into pages and adds appropriate hand-set titles and cuts. When the pages of type are made up, they are ready to be taken to the press.





Pressroom

From type to printed page

The type is put on the press, the paper and ink are adjusted, and the press begins to roll, turning out 1500 copies per hour.



Gathering and Stapling

From two large sheets to sixty-four pages with a cover

After being folded by machine, the two sections are assembled with the cover and are stapled.

Let's take a more careful look at this process...

The Editor and his staff



We'll start back at the editor's office. When he has put the finishing touches on the typewritten copy he passes it on to the make-up man, who estimates the length of each article as accurately as possible and draws up a tentative plan of the whole issue on a large sheet called a "dummy." Outlines of thirty-two pages are drawn to a scale on this dummy, making it possible for the make-up man to visualize half of the magazine at a time. At this point it is also decided what kinds of illustrations and headings (titles at the head of page), will be used.

* * *

Then the press manager takes over. He divides the typewritten copy of the articles among the linotype operators, so that both of them can be working on it simultaneously in order to save precious time.—Just a word about these linotype machines. To the uninitiated observer watching them for the first time, they seem little short of a mechanical miracle. The operator, seated before a keyboard which resembles that of an ordinary typewriter, touches the keys with all the nonchalance of an expert organist. The resemblance to an ordinary typewriter ends at the keyboard, however. Instead of one size and style of type, the linotype operator has at his command three different sizes of type, and by changing the type compartments he can use three other sizes or even a different style of type. But there is a still greater difference. Instead of making an ink impression on paper, the linotype machine assembles letter molds in a line as the operator touches the keys. When he has assembled enough letters to fill a line, he throws a lever and the machine automatically moves the line of molds to another part of the machine and pours molten metal into them, forming a line of raised type on a solid silvery bar.

When the instantly cooled bar or slug of type falls into place, a long mechanical arm reaches down, picks up the letter molds that were used, and replaces them in their proper places with all the ease of a mail clerk sorting letters.

All these shining bars of type, of which there are about 4800 in the issue you are now reading, are then assembled on long brass trays called "galleys," and proofs are "pulled" by hand. That is the printer's way of saying that the type in each galley is inked and a trial printing of it made on a long sheet of paper. These long sheets, or "galley proofs," as they are called, are then returned to the editor for proofreading, that is, checking for errors in spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

Meanwhile the make-up editor, who has an extra set of galley proofs, gets busy with his scissors and paste pot. He cuts the columns of print into pieces that will fit on his dummy (the scale drawing of a blank page) and pastes them on it in the exact position they will have in the finished magazine. He also indicates the position of the "cuts" (the metal plates that print the pictures and designs).

With the finished dummy as his guide, the compositor then goes to work dividing the linotype slugs into page-size sections and adding all headings that have to be set by hand in special type. The heading for this article, "Once a Month," was assembled letter by letter from the type case. All this type is exactly the reverse of the page to be printed from it, just as the negative of a photograph is the reverse of the print made from it. Consequently it all has to



Illustration by *Herbert Jepson*

be assembled upside down and backwards. To the untrained eye it looks like a jumble of metal slugs which are all alike, but from experience the typesetter can read the type that way with amazing speed.

When the type has been assembled into page-size sections, trial printings or "proofs" are made once more and the whole magazine is sent back to the editors again for a final proof reading. As soon as the corrections have been made, the pages of type are locked in a flat metal form and tightened in place by a system of wedges. Then to press!

Each form, containing the type to print thirty-two pages, is put on a truck table and wheeled to the press. Adjusting the flow of ink, the feed of paper, and the position of the print—the printers call it "making ready"—takes some time, but when the press once starts rolling, the 32x44 inch sheets containing half the magazine copy come off at the rate of 1500 per hour. Two of these large presses run simultaneously. Meanwhile the table of contents has been set and the cover is ready for the speed press. Our present cover requires two runs,

one for each color, but this duplication is offset by the greater speed of the press, and the cover is usually ready by the time the inside is printed.

* * *

The large printed sheets are then run through a folding machine. At one end of the machine they enter as single sheets 32x22 inches. After a series of dips and turns that are reminiscent of a roller coaster at a carnival, they are spilled out at the rate of 3200 per hour, folded to their finished size. The two halves of the inside are then gathered on the assembly line, the cover is added, and the whole thing is stapled by machine. Then the edges are trimmed by the mechanical cutter. After the magazines have been addressed, they are ready for the mail and for you—and, by that time, the editors are hard at work on the next issue.

* * *

The finished GRAIL which your postman delivers once a month is the result of the co-operative effort of over twenty-five men. In its production they use up about 75 pounds of ink, about 2½ tons of paper, and over 800 man hours of hard work.

"There are those who would rather be wrong than be silent."

Don't Say Tolerance, Say Love

BROTHERHOOD WEEK RADIO ADDRESS

by the Rev. Walter Sullivan, O. S. B.

Dear Friends:

Lest my position as a Catholic priest be misunderstood, allow me to say that for me and for the Catholic people who form a considerable part of this community, the Catholic Church is the way, the truth, and the life established on earth by Christ, the Savior, for the glory of God and the salvation of men. As a Catholic, I cannot subscribe to the belief that one religion is as good as another.

However, I do realize that my allegiance to the faith of our fathers is in no way jeopardized or compromised by my extending the hand of brotherhood and understanding to my fellow Americans who do not believe as I do. I realize, in this our day when war has bred new hatreds and let loose in the world a force of prejudice and intolerance, the fact that Jews, Catholics, and Protestants have a common duty to perform—the spread of charity for one another and charity for minority groups in our great country.

While Protestants, Jews, and Catholics cannot be *one* in matters of faith and religious worship, there are, I believe, ten points of mutual agreement which need to be emphasized:

1. The reverence for (the rights of) God.
2. The necessity of worship of God.
3. The primacy of charity for one another.
4. The practice of charity for one another.
5. The capacity of human nature to grow and develop religiously.
6. The Ten Commandments of God, binding alike Protestants, Jews, and Catholics.
7. The fact that all religions have worthy and unworthy members.
8. The sacredness of human life.
9. The need for extension of religious education.
10. A social service program.

If we, as Americans, are to live together in harmony, we should begin not just to tolerate—but to love one another.



JUBILEES

*** As the Abbey nears its centenary, more and more the fruits of the remote past are reaped—Jubilees. A twenty-fifth jubilee was celebrated on December 3 by five of our Brothers. They had made Profession—the official birthday into the monastic family—back in 1924. The Jubilarians were: Brother Francis—mender of shoes; Brother Wolfgang—cook; Brother Kilian—the butcher; and Brothers Vital and Felix—carpenter and mechanic. The latter two are stationed at St. Michael's Indian Mission, North Dakota, while the other three are here at the Abbey.

*** And speaking of jubilees, Brother Philip makes the news again, for on December 24 he finished three quarters of a century as a Benedictine Monk. It was on that day in 1874 that good old Brother Philip made his Profession before God, the saints in heaven, and the few monks of the Abbey at that time. A similar scene took place on December 24 of the past year when the same venerable Brother, surrounded by a great number of his brethren, renewed his vows to Almighty God. It was

his 75th Birthday as a monk. Father Abbot celebrated a Pontifical High Mass, during which Brother Philip quietly rocked back and forth in his rocking chair, watching, from his vantage point in the sanctuary, everything that was going on. After the ceremony of renewal, each of the professed members of the community approached the Jubilarian and gave him the kiss of peace. At the end of the Mass, Brother Philip was tired. After all, he is no longer young. February 3 will find him ninety-three years old.

VISITORS

*** A recent guest at our Abbey was Mr. Gilbert S. Ohlman, faculty member of the University of Louisville. Arriving on December 1, he remained with us until Christmas. The purpose of his stay was to acquaint himself with monasticism of the past as well as to observe, with scholarly eye, monasticism of the present.

*** A few of our Fathers who have been pursuing their studies elsewhere returned for the Christmas holidays. Among them were: Father Rudolph, a student at the University of New York; Father

Paschal, at the Catholic University of America; and Father Basil, Notre Dame University.

PERSONS

*** The mother of our Brother Gabriel reached her 100th Birthday on December 8.

*** The first appointee for our New Priory in South Dakota, became known on December 7; he is Brother Kevin. In addition to his regular work in the bakery, he now assists in the kitchen in order to learn how to cook.

SICK

*** On December 11, Father Walter, recently appointed editor of the *GRAIL*, was taken to Holy Cross Hospital in Chicago for the removal of a malignant tumor. The operation was very successful, thanks to the skill of the doctors and the prayers of Father Walter's many confreres and friends. After some weeks of further treatment and recuperation Father Walter hopes to return to his post as editor.

*** News arrived from St. Michael's Indian Mission, North Dakota, that on December 21 Father Paul had a mishap. He broke his leg while ice-skating. Skating would seem a rather vigorous sport for a man of 68 years!

*** Father Norbert returned to the Abbey immediately before Christmas, only to leave again for a hospital in Indianapolis because of further illness. However, his quick recovery is expected.



Father Walter

EVENTS

*** Although December 6 now seems a long time ago, this is the first opportunity to report on the visit of St. Nicholas. On the eve of that Saint's feast the monks assembled in one of the courtyards of the monastic buildings to enjoy some Christmas carols sung by the College Octet. In the midst of the singing, a loudspeaker filled the air with the joyous sound of bells—the signal that St. Nicholas would soon be there. From a corner of the court, two small, flickering lanterns moved slowly toward the group of monks. Between the two lantern bearers was St. Nicholas himself, attired in the colorful richness of a Bishop's garb. The sound of rattling chains called attention to a small dark figure following the

Saint at some distance. This was Krampus, the little black devil with a long red tongue, red horns, and lengthy red tail. As St. Nicholas approached the microphone to say a few words and read from his book of good deeds, Krampus also disclosed a book of his own, revealing less favorable deeds for which punishments were in order. St. Nicholas, however, came to the rescue each time by getting signs of repentance from the accused. All were rewarded at the close with a stick of candy from the good old Saint.

*** The Harrison Township Farmers' Institute, an organization to further the cause of rural life, met here on December 14 and 15. All local farmers were cordially invited and the seminarians were permitted to attend those meetings which did not conflict with the time of the regular class schedule. The first meeting—on December 14 at 7 P.M.—was opened with prayer by the Rev. Maurice DeJean of St. Croix, Ind. The entire assembly then sang "America." The speech of welcome was given by Father Abbot. Next, a movie was shown. Mr. John L. Varner then spoke a few words. The Major Seminarians closed the first day's program with a short entertainment. The next day found the auditorium decked out in various exhibits from the farm and home. Appointed judges awarded white, red, and blue ribbons. At 10 A.M. the meetings began with

an invocation pronounced by Father Linus, O.S.B. The program continued till evening, except for time at noon to enjoy a basket dinner. Addresses were delivered by Rev. Maurice DeJean, Mr. Lewis E. Cooper, Mr. Robert Hogue, Mr. Clarence Kaiser, Mrs. Harold Caruthers, and Miss Lorraine Amy. After the noon intermission the school children of Fulda, Ind., and of the town of St. Meinrad, held a spelling contest. The Institute came to a close about 5 P.M. after the passing of resolutions, election of officers, and drawing of attendance prizes.

*** In addition to the Christmas Midnight Mass we were privileged to have a Midnight Mass on the eve of the New Year. This permission was granted by a recent decree of Pope Pius XII because of the Holy Year, 1950. Father Abbot celebrated the Pontifical High Mass.

*** A Christmas concert was presented to the community on December 20. Taking part in the concert were the Abbey Symphony Orchestra, the Glee Club of the Minor Seminary, the Choristers of the Chancel Choir, and the Sixth Class Octet. Included on the varied program of the orchestra were Prokofieff's "Peter and the Wolf" and Romberg's "French Military Marching Song." The Choristers, accompanied by the orchestra, sang the "Children's Prayer" from Hänsel and Gretel. The Sixth Class Octet added new life and

gaiety to an old favorite, "Jingle Bells." Among the vocal numbers by the Glee Club were "Behold That Star" and "Carol of the Bells." An especially delightful portion of the program was the singing of "Twas the Night before Christmas" by a mixed chorus made up of the Sixth Class Octet and twelve boy sopranos and altos. To the audience's enthusiastic reception of their singing, this group responded with an unusual feature—an eleven-voice arrangement of "The Twelve Days of Christmas." The entire program was under the direction of Father Theophane.

*** On December 28 all the Abbey employees enjoyed a noon banquet in the students' dining hall, followed by entertainment in the auditorium. This custom was begun thirteen years ago with the express purpose of showing our sincere gratitude to our employees for their spirit of loyalty and co-operation.

*** Our underground telephone cable went out of order on December 11. All outside communication was severed for several hours until Brother Augustine, our electrician, was able to make a temporary adjustment.

Nicholas Schmidt, O. S. B.



Yes... time flies. And before you realize it, Lent will be here and you will be looking for a good spiritual book to use for reading and meditation. We recommend *The Crown of Sorrow* by Archbishop Goodier, S.J. It has fifty-two thought-provoking paragraphs about Our Lord's Passion. Order from the Grail Office

St. Meinrad, Indiana

\$1.25

Also... The Grail is publishing a special vocation number for boys and girls who are thinking about their future. A new feature of *Follow Christ*, 1950, will be an article on the lay apostolate. Ready for March, Vocation Month
25¢ a copy

Growth of a Monster

An intelligent grasp of the present state of world affairs is impossible without a knowledge of the development of secularism from individualism

INDIVIDUALISM has dealt devastating blows to Christianity. It is the immediate ancestor of today's secularism. Unfortunately for society's moral order, Individualism has not yet achieved its full growth. One has only to view the various steps in its development to clearly realize that its current destructiveness, terrific as it is, is not the end of the story.

The birth of the monster

When Individualism was born in the 16th century, it did not cause those who left the Church to lose their faith in Christ. Those who fell prey to its false philosophy did, it is true, reject the Church; but never for one instant had they any intention of rejecting Christianity. On the contrary, many of those who left the Church felt convinced that, through the new creeds established, they were giving to Christianity a far more intelligent and mature interpretation.

The denial of Christ

The 17th century saw a change in this pattern. Individualism had not been born fully grown. As we of today look back through history's pages, we see that 16th century Individualism was but a youngster. It was a vicious youngster, but still far from its full growth. Error does not stand still. It either dies or else continuously develops into an ever larger scope of devastation. Hence we find the intellectuals of the 17th century rejecting the divinity of Christ, but retaining their belief in God the Father. In this connection, belief in the Father also underwent a drastic change. The Creator was no longer considered by many to be a personal God. He was now viewed as a highly impersonal, absentee God, a rather remote First Cause. This latest development in Individualism's error became known as Deism.

The dethronement of God

The 18th century saw the so-called thinkers openly rejecting God and putting Reason in His place. The French Revolution demonstrated this new trend clearly. Altars were ripped from churches and in place of God the revolutionists enthroned a gutter courtesan, labeling her in hideous mockery the "Goddess of

Reason." Man fell deeply in love with his reason and hence with himself. It should be noted that this new false concept of things was limited largely to the so-called intellectuals. During this century it did not filter down through the masses except here and there, as in the French Revolution.

The 19th century, however, saw the masses becoming indoctrinated with this highly explosive error. Materialism gained wide acceptance and with it went a general unbelief in Christianity and its teachings. Generally speaking, this new attitude was more indifferent than hostile to religion. The great gains among the masses made by this false philosophy were largely the result of secularized education.

Militant atheism

Our own century sees not only Secularism strongly in the saddle, but also an atheism so vigorous that it officially styles itself Militant Atheism. Individualism in religion has grown from the youngster it was in the 16th century into a vigorous young adult now perfectly capable of going places in a big way. The steps in Individualism's growth are now plainly seen. First came a rejection of the Church. With the Church of Christ rejected, it was only logical that the next rejection would be that of Christ Himself. With Christ rejected, the next step called for the recognition of an impersonal, absentee God. With God playing a decreasingly important

role in the affairs of man and society, widespread indifferentism was the logical result. From indifferentism it is only a relatively short step into atheism. Militant atheism does not merely ignore religion. Its nature demands that it attempt to destroy utterly both religion and morality.

This is not the end

To today's Christians it must appear that militant atheism is surely the final step in Individualism's growth. One is hard put to imagine what could possibly be worse. But we must not forget that the 16th century Catholic felt that the worst possible had happened when millions of persons were led to reject the Church. In the same way, the faithful of the 17th century must have felt positive that Individualism had scored its final and most devastating triumph in the rejection of Christ and of a personal God. Then, surely, the Christian of the 18th century must have felt that the world had figuratively come to an end when God was replaced by man's reason. Each one of these steps must have appeared at the time as the very last step in the rejection of religion. Certainly the 16th century Catholic never for a moment believed that the day would come when militant atheism would become the creed of one of the world's largest nations.

Looking back we can see how wrong were the people of the last several centuries when they believed

that the maximum amount of damage to religion had been done in their respective times. We can also see that Individualism is not a static thing, but that it grows progressively into new forms of viciousness. As we have stated previously, Individualism must either be utterly destroyed or else it will continue to grow into ever bigger monstrosities. Current history shows that Individualism is definitely not on its way down and out. On the contrary, it is gaining greater power and vigor. This should cause us to realize that today's widespread atheism, horrible as it is, is not Individualism's final achievement.

The uncertain future

It must be admitted, however, that even the most vivid imagination can scarcely name the monstrous folly which the people of the 21st century will surely perpetuate unless Individualism is checked before then. Since Individualism's nature is anarchistic, may it not be possible that world-wide anarchy will be the pattern of the next century? To predict such a condition may seem far-fetched, but in a world gone utterly berserk, almost anything can happen and usually does.

England's story

Let us now take a specific example and view the steps by which Individualism has throttled religion to the gasping point. Let us look at

England's situation, for it is there that Individualism has found most fertile soil for its growth.

John Locke, the 17th century philosopher, has had a profound influence on modern thinking. It was he who was responsible for the birth of political Liberalism. While Locke's interest was mainly in the political scene of his day, he nevertheless had very considerable influence upon English Protestantism. As his ideas became more widespread, they became largely responsible for the de-Christianization of Europe.

Locke's position in the religious scene was a peculiar one. He was bitterly opposed to the Catholic Church, yet his opposition was not religious but political. He was a strong supporter of William of Orange and feared that Catholic opposition to this foreign prince might ultimately unseat him. Hence he did everything possible to belittle Roman Catholic patterns. Actually he was more against the Catholic organization than Catholic theology. Perhaps this attitude stemmed partly from his bitter anticlericalism. This anticlericalism was not confined to the Roman clergy. Locke was equally hostile to Anglican and Presbyterian clergymen.

Denatured Christianity

The outcome of Locke's several attitudes was a new philosophy of religious behavior known as Latitudinarianism.

Latitudinarianism is Liberalism in religion, an alleged "Christian" toleration of all religious beliefs. Locke did not accept the fact that the Church is divinely instituted. He believed that all churches, regardless of creed, are free associations contracted for by man. He also held that while denominations should be free in ritual and theology, they should adjust their moral patterns to agree with the concept of morality held by the state. To him, a religious denomination was little more than a philosophical society. He pooh-poohed the idea that a clergy is necessary. To support his stand he quoted the New Testament to the effect that when two or three are gathered together in Christ's name, Christ is present. Since Locke's teachings enjoyed a wide popularity, they were peculiarly fatal to traditional Christianity. In the final analysis, Locke's Latitudinarianism meant nothing more than "good Joe-ism."

England's school system reflects the denatured view of Christianity held by Locke. For example, denominational schools are fully supported by the government provided the religious instruction they give is undenominational. These schools agree to use an Agreed Syllabus which is undenominational in character. Denominational schools which insist upon giving instruction in denominational religion receive less aid. As a result, the majority of England's denominational schools teach undenominational religion,

which is in effect little more than ethics. The results of this devitalized Christianity can be plainly seen in the following surveys of English religious life.

The present state of religion

At the Modern Churchmen's Congress held in 1938, a leading English clergyman said: "Church congregations have declined by three fourths since the Great War. Church schools and Sunday schools show an alarming decrease." In 1943, the Church of England appointed a special commission to inquire into the religious situation. This commission reported in 1945. Said one section of the report: "The state of the Christian religion in this country urgently calls for definite action. That definite action is no less than the conversion of England to the Christian faith. There can be no doubt that there is a wide and deep gulf between the Church and the people. It is indisputable that only a small percentage of the nation today joins in public worship of any kind. It has been recently estimated that from 10% to 15% of the population are closely linked to some Christian church; that 25% to 30% are sufficiently interested to attend a place of worship upon great occasions; that 45% to 50% are indifferent to religion, though more or less friendly disposed towards it; while 10% to 20% are hostile." The commission found that the collapse of morality equals the collapse of religion.

Patrick Shaughnessy, O. S. B.

Death Comes to the Persecutors

■ God takes revenge
on those who persecute
His friends.

Part II

Persecution of course, was not to stop with the death of Christ, for "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before you.... The hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering worship to God." (John 15, 18; 16, 2) Until Constantine the Great, persecutions continued. The persecutors made saints for the Church but they did not make saints of themselves. In their shameful deaths we may without doubt see an anticipation or foretaste of their punishment in the world to come. It is this that Lactantius brings out in his work on the deaths of the persecutors.

First among those considered by Lactantius is NERO (died, 68 A.D.) who is described as an "execrable and pernicious tyrant". "He it was who first persecuted the servants of God; he crucified Peter and slew Paul: nor did he escape with impunity, for God looked on the affliction of His people, and therefore the tyrant bereaved of authority and precipitated from the height of empire, suddenly disappeared and even the burial place of that noxious wild beast was nowhere to be seen."

Nero was followed by another tyrant no less wicked, namely, DOMITIAN (died, 96 A.D.). "He reigned in security, although in wickedness, until at length he stretched forth his impious hands against the Lord. Having been instigated by the evil demons to persecute the righteous people, he was then delivered into the power of his enemies, and suffered due punishment. To be murdered in his own palace was not vengeance ample enough; the very memory of his name was erased. For although he had erected many admirable edifices and rebuilt the capitol and left other distinguished marks of his magnificence, yet the senate did so persecute his name as to leave no remains of his statues or traces of the inscriptions put up in honor of him, and by most solemn and severe decrees it branded him, even after death, with perpetual infamy.

"DECIUS [died, 117 A.D.] appeared in the world, an accursed wild beast, to afflict the Church, and who but a bad man would persecute religion? It seems as if he had been raised to sovereign eminence,

at once to rage God, and at once to fall; he was suddenly surrounded by the barbarians and slain together with the greater part of his army; nor could he be honored with the rites of sepulture, but, stripped and naked, he lay to be devoured by wild beasts and birds . . . a fit end for the enemy of God.

"And presently **VALERIAN** [died, 260 A.D.], also under a similarly mad impulse, lifted up his hands to assault God, and, although his time was short, shed much righteous blood. But God punished him in a new and extraordinary manner, that it might be a lesson to future ages that the adversaries of Heaven always receive the just recompense of their iniquities. He, having been made prisoner by the Persians, lost not only the power which he had exercised, but also the liberty of which he deprived others. Valerian lived for a considerable time under the well-merited insults of his conqueror. Afterward when he had finished this shameful life under so great dishonor, he was flayed, and his skin, stripped from his flesh, was dyed with vermillion, and placed in the temple of the gods of the barbarians that this spectacle might be exhibited as an admonition to the Romans, so that, beholding the spoils of their captured emperor in the Persian temple, they should not place too great confidence in their own strength.

"Now, since God so punished the sacrilegious is it not strange that anyone should afterward have dared

to do or even to devise aught against the majesty of the one God, who governs and supports all things?

"**AURELIAN** [died 275 A.D.] might have recollected the fate of the captured emperor, yet, being of a nature outrageous and headstrong, he forgot both his sin and its punishment, and by deeds of cruelty irritated the divine wrath. He was not however, permitted to accomplish what he had devised; for just as he began to give loose to his rage, he was slain. His bloody edicts had not yet reached the more distant provinces, when he himself lay all bloody on the earth at Caenophrurium in Thrace, assassinated by his familiar friends, who had taken up groundless suspicions against him.

"Examples of such a nature, and so numerous, ought to have deterred succeeding tyrants; nevertheless they were not only not dismayed, but, in their misdeeds against God, became more bold and presumptuous.

"**SEVERUS** [died 307 A.D.] in an attempt to capture Rome from the power of Maxentius, who had recently been declared emperor there, marched on the city according as it was commanded him by Galerius. Presently the soldiers raised up their ensigns, abandoned Severus and yielded themselves to Maxentius, against whom they had come. What remained but flight for Severus, thus deserted? He was encountered by Maximian who had resumed the imperial dignity. On this he took refuge in Ravenna and shut himself

up there with a few soldiers. But perceiving that he was about to be delivered up, he voluntarily surrendered himself, and restored the purple to him from whom he had received it; and after this he obtained no other grace but that of an easy death, for he was compelled to open his veins and in that gentle manner expired.

"Now the designs of MAXIMIAN [Herculius—died, 310 A.D.] having been frustrated, he took flight, as he had done twice before and returned into Gaul with a heart full of wickedness and intending by treacherous devices to overreach Constantine, who was not only emperor but his son-in-law. The Franks had taken up arms and Maximian advised the unsuspecting Constantine not to lead all his troops against them, and he said that a few soldiers would suffice. He gave this advice that Constantine might be overpowered. After some time, Maximian spread abroad the rumor of his death. But Constantine, informed of these events, hastened back with his army. Maximian, not yet prepared to oppose him, was overpowered, and he fled to Marseilles. He was finally captured and dragged into Constantine's presence, heard a recital made of his crimes, was divested of his imperial robe and after this reprimand obtained his life.... But he finally ended his detestable life by a death base and ignominious.

"God, the Avenger of religion and His people, turned His eyes from

Maximian to GALERIUS [died, 311 A.D.], the author of the accursed persecution, that in his punishment He might also manifest the power of His Majesty.

"And now, when Galerius was in the eighteenth year of his reign, God struck him with an incurable plague. A malignant ulcer formed itself and spread by degrees. A vein burst and blood flowed in such quantity as to endanger his life. After healing for a time, in consequence of some slight move Galerius received a hurt and the blood streamed more abundantly than before. He grew more emaciated, pallid, and feeble, and the bleeding was then stanch'd. The ulcer began to be insensible to the remedies applied and gangrene seized all the neighboring parts. It diffused itself wider the more the corrupted flesh was cut down, and everything employed as a means of cure served but to aggravate the disease. The masters of the healing art withdrew. No human means had any success. Approaching to its deadly crisis the disease occupied his lower body even to the generation of worms, and with intolerable anguish his body dissolved into one mass of corruption. Stung to the soul he bellowed with pain, as roars the wounded bull... Already through a complication of distempers, the different parts of his body had lost their natural form: the superior part was dry, meager and haggard, and his ghastly-looking skin had settled itself deep amongst

his bones; while the inferior, distended like bladders, retained no appearance of joints. These things happened in the course of a complete year; and at length, overcome by calamities, he was obliged to acknowledge God, and he cried aloud, in the intervals of raging pain, that he would rebuild the Church which he had demolished and make atonement for his misdeeds; and, when he was near his end, he published an edict in favor of the Christians, allowing them again to practice their faith and observances, and imposing a duty on them to pray for his own welfare, for that of the public, and for their own.

"Galerius did not by the publication of this edict obtain the divine forgiveness. A few days afterwards he was consumed by the horrible disease that had brought on universal putrefaction.

"Of the adversaries of God there still remains one, whose overthrow I am now to relate. And now a civil war broke out between Constantine and MAXENTIUS [died, 312 A.D.]. In forces Maxentius exceeded his enemy. They fought and the troops of Maxentius prevailed. At length, Constantine, with steady courage and a mind prepared for every event, led his whole forces to the neighborhood of Rome and encamped them opposite to the Milvian bridge. Constantine was directed in a dream to cause the heavenly sign to be delineated on the shields of his soldiers and so to proceed to battle.

He did as he was commanded and marked on their shields the letter X, with the perpendicular line drawn through it and turned around at the top, being the symbol of "Christ." Having thus this sign, his troops stood to arms. The armies met and fought with utmost exertion of valor and firmly maintained their ground. In the meantime a sedition arose at Rome and Maxentius was reviled as one who had abandoned all concern for the safety of the commonwealth; and suddenly, while he exhibited the Circensian games on the anniversary of his reign, the people cried with one voice, 'Constantine cannot be overcome.' Dismayed at this, Maxentius burst from the assembly and having called some senators together ordered the Sibylline books to be searched. In them it was found that 'on the same day the enemy of the Romans should perish.' Led by this response to the hope of victory he went to the field. The bridge behind him was broken down. At the sight of that, the battle became fiercer. The hand of the Lord prevailed and the forces of Maxentius were routed. He fled towards the broken bridge, but, the multitude pressing on him, he was driven headlong into the Tiber.

"DIOCLETIAN [died, 313 A.D.], that author of ill and deviser of misery, lived to see disgrace which no former emperor had ever seen, and under the double load of vexation of spirit and bodily maladies, he resolved to die. Tossing to and fro, with his soul agitated by grief,

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he could neither eat nor take rest. He sighed, groaned, and wept often, and incessantly threw himself into various postures, now on his couch, and now on the ground. So he who for twenty years was the most prosperous of emperors, having been cast down into the obscurity of a private position, treated in the most contumelious manner and compelled to abhor life, became incapable of receiving nourishment and, worn out with anguish of mind, expired.

"DAIA [died 313 A.D.], when he heard that Constantine was victorious and Rome was freed and when he heard that the senate had called Constantine "the Greatest," a title which he had always arrogated to himself, grew outrageous and avowed enmity toward Constantine. But the troops of Daia were slaughtered. Daia at length fled to Tarsus. There, being hard pressed both by sea and land, he despaired of finding any place of refuge; and in the anguish and dismay of his mind he sought death as the only remedy of those calamities that God had heaped upon him. But first he gorged himself with food and large draughts of wine, as those are wont to do who believe that they eat and drink for the last time; and so he swallowed poison. However, the force of the poison, repelled by his full stomach, could not immediately operate, but it produced a grievous disease resembling the plague; and his life was prolonged only that his suffering might be more severe. And now the poison began to rage

and to burn up everything within him, so that he was driven to distraction with the intolerable pain; and during a fit of frenzy, which lasted four days, he gathered handfuls of earth and greedily devoured it. Having undergone various and excruciating torments, he dashed his forehead against the wall and his eyes started out of their sockets. And now become blind, he imagined he saw God with his servants arrayed in robes of white, sitting in judgment on him. He roared out as men on the rack are wont and exclaimed that not he but others were guilty. In the end, as if he had been racked into confessing, he acknowledged his own guilt and lamentably implored Christ to have mercy on him. Then, amidst groans like those of one burned alive, he breathed out his guilty soul in the most horrible kind of death."

The great persecutions came to an end. The Church had conquered and was to flourish and enjoy its newly found freedom. But the struggle was not yet over. "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before you... The hour is coming for everyone who kills you to think that he is offering worship to God." (John 15, 18; 16,2) There were to be more persecutions and the deaths of those who would bring them about were to resemble in a remarkable way the deaths of the first persecutors. We intend to narrate briefly in the next installment the deaths of some of the later outstanding persecutors, down to the present day.

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Hilary Ottensmeyer, O. S. B.

LITURGY

SEPTUAGESIMA

preparation for penance

**We need to be jolted
out of our complacence**

ASCAL once remarked, "Man's nobility is great from the fact that he is aware that he is wretched.... All those miseries prove his greatness. They are the miseries of a nobleman, a deposed king." But we may not be as keenly alert to our nobility or our misery as the great Frenchman thinks we are. Evidently the Church has misgivings about the matter. Just to make sure, she sets aside a three-week period before Lent, packs it with motives for penance, dresses it out in the traditional sackcloth and ashes, and gives just a passing nod of assent to man's being worth all this fuss. If you are one of the few who hear Gregorian Chant at your parish Mass, the words of the first slow, sad melody to greet you on the first Sunday of this season, Septuagesima* Sunday, will be: "The anguish

of the dying surrounded me, the grief of hell pressed about me."

Down deep inside himself, every man should realize that he is wandering in a world grown hostile to him. Where before was harmony and readiness to bend beneath his kingly hand, the earth, obedient to God, is outraged at man's mysterious disobedience in the garden long ago. We need to be jolted out of our complacence, we need to become aware of these forces surging about us, to know our wretchedness. It means acknowledging the fact that the deadly poison of sin is injected deep in the veins of our being. Yet there is left us, still, a faded glory, a shabby and seedy dignity. The image of the Maker was burned in too carefully, too lovingly ever to be erased. At best, we are a strange vineyard

*Septuagesima, Sexagesima, and Quinquagesima are Latin numerals originally meant to count off the number of days before Easter. The figures are inaccurate now, and are used merely to designate the three Sundays preceding Lent. They mean respectively: seventieth, sixtieth, and fiftieth. The word for Lent, Quadragesima, means fortieth.

of God's, yet the Vintager is content not to abandon the stocks planted therein.

This season of Septuagesima also introduces the second part of the big plan of the newly-come Christ. Having drawn about Himself our humanity, He now sets out to invest us with His divinity. To do this, we have to gradually step down from the serene heights of Bethlehem. There we thought of the Little God living among us. Now we are to consider ourselves, and why He comes among us. We are already within the porticoes of Lent, looking Passion-ward. We are being eased into a penitential season with subtle psychology.

All sin springs from misguided love. To lead us back to a right way of loving, three commanding figures, three patriarchs from the Old Testament, step before us. They are types of Christ, set forth to point up this or that aspect of His character. Very aptly chosen they are, too. In the strong phrase of St. Augustine: "The Old Testament bore Christ in its loins." The device of a symbol is used because man is a symbol-making creature himself. Long ago, St. Augustine wrote:

How profitable are the suggestions of symbolism for kindling and feeding the fire of our love; they move and enflame us more than if we possessed the realities themselves without veils or images. It is a fact that an idea suggested by an allegory *moves and charms us more than if we heard it in its proper terms.*

The reason behind the use of symbols and signs is rooted in our

dual make-up. We are body and spirit, a really unique type of creature no matter where you look in creation. We share in the life of animals and angels, passing easily from animal acts and gestures, to the contemplation of things sublime and infinite. But, in a symbol, we pool the riches of both our worlds. The material symbol, be it a flag, picture, gaudy valentine, or salvo of guns, has a non-material meaning. Every time the Church uses oil, salt, incense, or the rhythm of song, she capitalizes on this earth-heaven blend in our make-up. "If you had no body," wrote St. John Chrysostom, "God would have granted you merely invisible gifts, but because your soul is united to a body, he gives you understanding of his teaching through the things of sense."

THE first of the symbols put before us in Septuagesima is

Adam. There is hardly a more striking symbol of Christ. As Adam bore within his body the seed of all the generations of men to come, so Christ, the new Adam, will sire all his sons in the new life of post-Passion days. Look at the contrast here too. Adam gave us an eye dimmed to the vision of God, a heart halting in the following of God's will, a tongue ready with deceit, and a mind skilled in self-deception—a "whole condemned mass," as St. Augustine put it. (Here is persuasion enough to lead us willingly Lent-ward.) Christ had none of these defects. On the contrary, He

did do much to repair the situation Adam left behind. Christ did not take away the gaping wounds, but He cauterized them, made us keenly aware of them, gave us divine medicines to keep them in check, and made it possible to enjoy God's love despite them.

NOE, the second symbol, is spoken of on Sexagesima Sunday. He is called simply *the Savior*, and a colorful role he plays. He alone "found grace before the Lord" at a time when God repented He had made man. Noe, sailing in his ark on the crest of the flood, portrays a Christ cleansing the world. The venerable old helmsman saw the then known world scoured like a dirty kettle, an evil-smelling saucenpan that had sent up the stench of personal sin to the nostrils of an indignant God. Noe stood as a link with the life of the old, passing on life to a renewed world. Christ did more. Instead of pouring the lava of divine wrath over the world once more, Christ sent forth the flood of his own red, redeeming blood, and washed the world clean in his spent love. A land and life we had never known lay in all resplendence, awaiting our habitation, once the new Noe stepped from the wooden ark of Calvary.

BUT of all the men in the Old Testament he who looked the most like Christ, as a symbol, certainly was Abraham. He stands before us on Quinquagesima Sunday.

He who at King Melchisedech's altar watched possibly the first sacrifice offered under the signs of bread and wine; he who spoke alone with God beneath the silent oaks of Mambré, who took the load of suffering and total faith squarely on his shoulders. It was to Abraham the Father said: "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, *because thou hast obeyed my voice*" (Gen. 22, 18). This is an echo of another phrase: "I do always the things that are pleasing to him (my Father)" (John 8, 29). With Abraham began the "Chosen People," the children of God's especial love. These are the men of the great Old Testament treaty with God, the flume down which God would channel His prophecies, laws, love, and chastisement. Eventually from this same lineage would bud forth a Messias. Abraham's Christ-likeness pivots primarily on this fathering of the Chosen People, with all the anguish and heartbreak it entailed. Abraham's typifying of Christ affords deep penetration into Christ's work. Simply, Christ—the "Father of the world to come," according to Isaías—is a second Abraham to all Christians, the new Chosen People. With him the Father made a new treaty, a new testament. His sons now lay claim to the love of God, demanding it as their rightful heritage, asking heaven as their just due, prepaid by the Cross.

Francois Mauriac once wrote: "God hides in the midst of cities, according to the needs of each age,

among less sublime creatures who love, suffer, and expiate close to the ground, at man's height." Such is the role this short Septuagesima season asks us to play, shorn of grandeur and pomp though it be.

Through its lessons we see there should be no objection to an approaching penitential season. It is ours to pass with a certain grace and gentle acceptance into the manly struggles of Lent.

▼ CONCERNING ENVIRONMENT ▼

We live in the stockyard district of Chicago, but four blocks from the pens where animals are brought daily for sale and slaughter. At times the odor is terrific, and we must needs close the windows in order to breathe easily. This is what is termed a semi-slum area . . . half the houses falling down, the other half old-fashioned but fairly well kept. It is the only place we've been able to find we could afford to live in, and still have three children in the five years of our marriage.

Our friends, who love us dearly, but think our values slightly out of line, think we should limit our family, at least until we get out of this neighborhood. They frankly charge that this is no decent place to rear children and that it is not "fair" to bring them into the world with such beginnings. And, it would seem, the more children we have the less likely it is that we will ever be able to afford better lodgings.

We shrug off their objections, spoken or unspoken, for we have a certain joyful knowledge to hug to our hearts. Our circumstances . . . poverty, humility, and no other place to go . . . circumstances permeated with the perennial barnyard perfume . . . resemble so closely, in a twentieth-century way, another situation.

There was a certain stable in Bethlehem . . .

Sally McHugh
from *Vivant*

Who Shall Bear the Flame?

"Another dynamic
Christian challenge
from France"

CARDINAL Saliège's *Who Shall Bear the Flame?* is a vibrant, saving challenge to every Christian.

Here in a little over 185 pages are approximately sixty pastoral letters; but within such a small compass is given a whole life of a nation, a whole way of life, and a whole key to the way with such depth, clarity, and virility that one is left breathless and elated.

Erase the names Toulouse, France, Germany, Vichy, that place the pastoral letters in World War II; write in Antioch, Ephesus, Rome, or any place of early Christian times when martyrs made the new way of life alive and palpitant. The truths taught and preached in these papers take on the same timelessness, for

WHO SHALL BEAR THE FLAME? By Jules-Géraud Cardinal Saliège. Translated by Speer Strahan. Fides Publishers, 325 Lincoln Way West, South Bend 1, Indiana. 191 pp. \$2.75 (cloth). \$1.75 (paper).

Cardinal Saliège heeds the words of the Gospel by "bringing forth out of his treasure new things and old."

Several grand Christian themes appear again and again in these letters as the Primate of the Fighting French holds up Faith, Unity, and dignity of the human person as models for a people terribly straitened on every side. He is as fearless in calling the attention of his flock to the causes for their downfall. There is a twofold but unifying love in this Shepherd for his sheep—he loves them insofar as they are his children in Christ, and he loves them because they are children of his country, France.

Le Temps said, in the middle of 1940, speaking of the French Republic: "We are not on the edge of the precipice but at the bottom of the abyss." The Cardinal's group of pastorals, however, reveals a nation at the most advanced outposts of Christian thought on practically all planes.

The strong denunciations of this prelate have much the same quality found in such writers as Péguy and Bloy at the turn of the century, and in Bernanos and Mauriac today. Evil is seen, recognized, and exposed to us as the tremendous power it is.

Cardinal Saliège stands between Cardinal Suhard and Father Godin: every inch a prince of the Church in an unyielding insistence on the Christian way of life, and every inch a loving father, ready to weep with his suffering people at their personal misfortunes and losses. He loves the masses as a good shepherd, even as he hates their vices.

Although in his seventies, Cardinal Saliège does not look back to former times like an émigré or reactionary. He knows well the old times are past and inveighs against those who hope for a return to a nostalgic era of nationalism. Individualism has received its deathblow, he says. The national period is ended. Responsibility among men is now a continental affair, but, looking still further ahead, the shrewd old Churchman envisions a worldwide unity of mankind. This unity, he insists, is founded on *unus pastor, unum ovile*. He has true Christian youthfulness.

The Cardinal's confidence in France is unshakable. In these letters, France is a person, loved for her providential mission and as the favorite daughter of the Church. But Cardinal Saliège castigates severely the wayward daughter for her sins that led to such a downfall: an insensate pursuit of pleasure, an immorality that struck fatal blows at the family, the terrible loss of a salutary sense of sin. Then he applies the ointment to heal: "In spite of all the poisons that infected it, French blood has kept at least some

drops of Christian blood. That is a guarantee for the future."

His language is so simple that the fire and love which color it do not cloud the issues he presents. He thinks and writes with the logic we identify with the French. The introduction to a paper "On the Vocation of Humanity" is as scholastic as the beginning of a 12th century philosophic treatise. The Cardinal's insistence on the immanence of God is as *au courant* as an opinion in Lubac's theology. His fundamental view of the unity of men (which he insists is not "a graveyard of brains") is founded squarely on St. Paul's teaching that as "living stones of the same building... members of one body... we are all one in Christ."

The encyclicals and letters of the Holy Fathers point up Cardinal Saliège's teaching and preaching. He really feeds his sheep the food provided for them by the Pastor of all pastors, the Pope. The encyclical *Mystici Corporis* serves him as a springboard not only in his insistence on the unity of mankind but also as a background for letters on Catholic Action. France has grasped the fact that Catholic Action must have matter as well as spirit, and "can succeed only if it be embodied in temporal organizations, as spirit in matter." With such an embodiment in the Mystical Body, the Cardinal continues, Catholic Action begins to act.

Though brief, the letters stimulate the mind by the richness of ideas

and ideals contained in them, based as they are on such wide experience and on a Christian past. They make excellent reading, especially for any nation that is so sure "it can't happen here." It couldn't happen in France, but it did. We would do well to read the symptoms of the ills that the Archbishop of Toulouse denounces openly to his people, so that we can make a diagnosis of our own ills. More wonderful still is the example of courage and spiritual strength, nurtured and kept alive by such men as Cardinal Saliège and his fellow worker, Cardinal Suhard, by Father Godin, by the social groups of the JOC and the Christian Trade Unions, demonstrating plainly that "the Christian knows where he is going. He knows his destination, he knows the way." All these men and groups are as Christian as the early followers of the Way. The letter "On the Duty of Keeping the Faith" ends with this statement, true of any division of the Christian family: "I tell you, if you remain good Christians, you will remain French." So may we remain American!

Speer Strahan's translation is good from more than one viewpoint. He keeps the simplicity of language that makes the letters really pastoral. As an army chaplain in Europe in World War II, as a Catholic English scholar, as a man with an appreciation for both the spiritual *élan* and literary finesse of the French, he has caught much of the excitement of these papers and has lost none of it in bringing it over into English. Even the form of some of the shorter papers ("On the Divine Mercy," "On Faith in Jesus Christ," "On the Right to Live") are reminiscent of the peculiar sentence structure of a Péguy.

Although the book is decked out in an English dress, we see some of the best of Catholic France poured forth in strength and love by this wise old prince of the Church: awareness of a high destiny, recognition of faults, and the determination to keep and build on the spiritual strength that alone remained to France, shorn as she was of all her temporalities.

▼ A LIFE'S ROLE

"I was offered a part last month, but . . . I was too busy," mused photogenic Maureen O'Sullivan, 38, onetime movie mate of Tarzan and wife of director John Farrow (*Two Years Before the Mast*), as she posed for a picture in Hollywood with 6-months-old daughter Stephanie, her sixth child. "Perhaps, when the children are all grown, I'll become a character actress."

Time

Books

Reproachfully Yours
Mind the Baby
The Creed in Slow Motion
God in Our House
From God to God
The Three Wishes of Jamie McRuin

REPROACHFULLY YOURS. By Lucile Hasley. Sheed & Ward, 63 5th Ave., N. Y., 3, N. Y. 128 pp. \$2.25.

Every once in a while, someone tells you gushingly, "This book is a 'must'! You simply have to read it!" Actually, the number of books that you simply *have* to read is rather disconcertingly small. So this book is not recommended to you as a "must." You can get to heaven without it. On the other hand, if you're looking for some reading that is both entertaining and instructive, and you want nothing but the best that is being turned out these days, here is your book.

Mrs. Hasley is a convert. No—Mrs. Hasley is that completely refreshing person, the convert who doesn't know more theology than the priests; who is no more at home at Pontifical Vespers than is the average "born" Catholic to whom liturgical terms and symbols mean about as much as the scientific name for the giraffe; but who is completely happy despite this woeful deficiency of education, and is eager to keep on learning (her advice to converts: "Still be a seeker").

The results of her lively inquiring into the Faith and into life in general, are given us in these nineteen articles, here printed in book form for the first time. They are nineteen invaluable lessons in the too little understood art of looking at life and seeing it as it really is. Mrs. Hasley has no doubts as to how it really is; nor is she making any mistake regarding her own position in it. She has her ups and downs, but she doesn't make mountains out of them. She has a great deal to tell us about this art of living, and she does it with a warmth of humor that is a delight to share.

There is too much being passed off as humor today that is simply not funny. All the reworking of ideas, reshaping of constructions, all the feverish striving for "clever" expressions that is characteristic of so much of modern humorous writing, and that shows itself so clearly because of its very polish—all of it serves only to deaden and destroy whatever smattering of humor the writer may have started out with. For it destroys spontaneity, which surely is one of the chief characteristics of anything truly funny.

Mrs. Hasley is a real humorist. She never gives any evidence of being at a loss for words with which to clothe her thoughts. Every sentence is a joyful, gurglingly chuckleful overflowing of pure delight at the situations of life as she sees them. The words that come from her pen are the words that inevitably give fullest expression to the thoughts that are in her mind, and make poetry out of everything she writes. She is a delighted and delightful writer.

Theophane Gonnely, O.S.B.

MIND THE BABY! By Mary Perkins. Sheed & Ward, 63 5th Ave., N.Y. 3, N.Y. 122 pp. \$2.00. This reviewer has made the mistake, on at least five separate occasions, of attempting to read the whole Bible straight through. Eventually it dawned on him that it couldn't or at any rate shouldn't, be read that way, because the Holy Ghost evidently never intended that it should simply be ploughed through. No spiritual profit is forthcoming from such reading. One would have the same experience with a book like the *Imitation of Christ*. Such books are not to be taken in one tremendous gulp, any more than the devouring of the whole of a Christmas dinner is to be considered the proper feast of every Christmas diner. One takes a spoonful of this, a forkful of that, masticates it thoroughly, and swallows it—and one has dined well.

And so too, the Bible and the *Imitation* are read well if one takes a small portion at a time, and digests it completely.

All of which is not to suggest that Miss Perkins' book is on a level with the Bible or the *Imitation*. Not at all. Nor is it to say that it cannot be read straight through. It can, and very pleasant reading it will make. But it would certainly be a shame if this were done. For this is not a book meant primarily to entertain, though it does that, to be sure. Miss Perkins has a message to proclaim. It happens to be the same message that spiritual writers have been proclaiming ever since Christ first gave them the idea, but what of that? Too many of us in these past nineteen hundred years have missed it completely.

The message is this, that our sanctification is to be achieved by fidelity to the small duties of our daily life; that each of us is supposed to show forth the life of Christ in some way, and the only time we can possibly do it is *right now*, in the present moment.

Miss Perkins gives the whole idea a fresh and completely novel twist, exemplifying it in a mother's daily dealings with her small son. Ostensibly, she has prepared in content—though, thank goodness, not in form—a meditation book for mothers. But the injunction, "Mind the baby!" can be addressed to anyone; and the book can—and, we believe, should—be read by everyone.

The one thing we fear is this, that many readers will make the mistake of failing to see the central fact, that the relating of little things to God is not merely a good thing, but the surest road to sanctification. And so they will have missed the tremendous message.

If this happens, it will be the reader's own fault. Miss Perkins has a disconcerting habit of saying the most spiritually wonderful things in one sentence, and then letting it go at that. For example: "How wonderful to know that somebody [the baby] in our house is receiving all that God's love wants to give him, is giving all the glory to God he possibly can, simply by existing and wriggling and banging a bottle!" A book could be written about that sentence—and, in fact, has; this is it. But it would be easy to miss the point. It's up to the reader to remember that this refreshing book can be used for real meditation. That's why we emphasize the fact that this is a book to be taken in small doses—small doses savored well before swallowing.

Theophane Gonnely, O.S.B.

THE CREED IN SLOW MOTION.

By Ronald Knox. Sheed & Ward,
63 5th Ave., N.Y. 3, N.Y. 238 pp.
\$2.50.

During the late war, Msgr. Ronald Knox served as chaplain to a convent school in Shropshire, England. Among his duties was that of present-

ing a conference or sermon each Sunday afternoon to the little girls attending the school. What to say and how to say it Sunday after Sunday to the same young audience might well have baffled a scholar even of the Monsignor's caliber. But happily for his audience, for himself, and for us, he solved that problem by presenting a twin series of sermons on the Mass and the Apostles' Creed. Onto the mental screens of his restless, shuffling, and sniffing little audience, he projected these sermons in "slow motion."

From this double series of sermons grew two books: *The Mass in Slow Motion*, and now its recently published companion volume, *The Creed in Slow Motion*. In the former volume, Msgr. Knox emphasized the social and corporate aspect of the Holy Sacrifice, pointing out the importance of all Catholics' praying and sacrificing together as the Body of Christ. In the second volume, *The Creed in Slow Motion*, the Creed is considered as an individual and isolated act of faith, the responsibility of each man and woman in his own personal relationship to God. It amounts to this: "I believe in God. I do; no one else can do it for me. My own mind nods, 'Yes, I do believe.'"

Msgr. Knox, as his original audience demanded, never intended to give us an exhaustive, comprehensive exposition of the Nicene Creed. But this doesn't augur that he stooped to a second-rate rehash of time-worn pietistic clichés. Msgr. Knox is a scholar, and, being a

scholar of merit, he has explained the essentials contained in the Creed concisely, and with no little flare for humor. In this unassuming little volume of 238 pages, he has given us a readable, enjoyable, and, above all, presentable (and re-presentable to the non-Catholic mind) explanation of the truths we Catholics live by.

As far as slow motion is concerned, there is nothing slow about the Monsignor's wit or his informal style. The wit is English, but then, so is the Monsignor. Some of his humorous allusions to people, places, and customs are possibly beyond the geographical scope of a great part of his American audience, but none the less there is enough brightness and sparkle reflected from his unaffected, chatty manner to please even the critic. Fortunately this humor never becomes flippancy or an offhand attitude toward sacred things.

There is a buoyant, invigorating air of optimism suffusing this little book. It meets the ugliness of our world squarely, deals with it rationally, and goes on in a spirit of hope that at once charms and exhilarates. This atmosphere of Christian faith, this honest optimism is well epitomized in the concluding words of his sermon on the words, "the third day He rose from the dead."

And just as Christ, by rising again, has planted this irresistible principle of victory in your soul and mind, so by his rising again he has planted an irresistible principle of victory in

his Church. Again and again, when you read the history of the Church, you will come across periods when it looks as if the whole thing was no use, and there was nothing for her but to chuck up the sponge; the world keeps on persecuting her, and it seems bound to get her down . . . You will live your life, maybe, in equally troubled times, when it will look as if everything we Catholics care for were going under. But the Church is the Church of the Risen Christ, and till the end of time every death she undergoes will be the prelude to a resurrection.

Geoffrey Gaughan, O.S.B.

GOD IN OUR HOUSE. By Joseph A. Breig, America Press, 70 East 45th St., N.Y. 17, N.Y. 156 pp. \$2.50.

This is a down-to-earth comment upon a part (usually the Gospel) of the Masses for Sundays and some feasts. The author catches with keen accuracy the messages of the Missal and presents them in terms of the American Catholic family. The presentation is so warm and sparkling that these sketches would be wonderfully entertaining reading even without their relation to the Missal.

God In Our House is a compilation from the weekly column "The Word" in the Catholic review *America*, with a foreword in which Mr. Breig furnishes a delightful description of his children, who are

regular performers in the book.

Even though Mr. Breig's technique is to set down in simple language an intimate conversation with his children over some lines from the Missal, these reflections are by no means childish. Devotees of the Liturgy, be they steeped in Schuster, Parsch, or Guéranger, will find the true Christian spirit in these homey pages, so useful to Catholic parents.

God In Our House will go straight to the heart of anyone who has lived and loved in a big family. The emotional element is rich and strong. If a reader of this book discovers himself with happily moist eyes, he won't be the first one!

Blaise Hettich, O.S.B.

FROM GOD TO GOD. By Stephen J. Brown, S.J. The Bruce Publishing Company, 330 W. 42nd St., N.Y. 18, N.Y., and 105 S. LaSalle St., Chicago 3, Ill. 317 pp. \$3.00.

More than thirty books and numberless articles have come from the pen of Father Brown. In the present work he planned to give a series of short sketches on religion and its applications to common, everyday life.

The selection of topics: God, Christ, the Church, our life, and the inner life, are those best calculated to serve his purpose of giving some thoughts that would engender consolation and joy amid the burdens and care of life. It was the author's idea to be of help to those who have little leisure or inclination for serious thought. Admit we must that the

short time necessary for reading any one of the chapters supports this claim. It is certain that the many references to other books and authors cannot be of help to this class of reader. For example, the author says, "Besides these are many other works by noteworthy theologians: Vermeersch, Noldin, Bainvel, Petrovits, Terrien, Sauve."

In his introduction to the second part of the volume Father Brown affirms, "It will perhaps, do little more than call to your minds in simple but sincere words what you know already or once knew." Yes, the reader of the book must say, it does no more and does even that in no new or interesting manner.

There are many quotations from a great variety of works—but not blended together to make anything harmonious. From numerous places in the book it is evident that the author takes himself entirely too seriously. He evidently wanted to make the book conversational, but it tends to be a one-sided chat in which everything obvious about the topic must be brought in, somehow.

Since the book covers many of the essential notions about God, Christ, and the Church, it can be recommended to recent converts and to converts and to Catholics who have not had the opportunity of studying their religion on the High School level. For all others the value of this book would lie in the reading lists that are included at the end of many of the chapters.

Bonaventure Knaebel, O.S.B.

THE THREE WISHES OF JAMIE

McRUIN. By Charles O'Neal.
Julian Messner, 8 W. 40th St.,
N.Y. 18, N.Y. 248 pp. \$2.75.

Some readers will applaud this novel. Mary O'Hara, one of the judges who awarded the book third place in the recent Christopher contest, is lavish in her praise of its author: "Here is a writer who has a wealth of fascinating and colorful material, who is a master of dialogue, and who can create a lovable human character with a stroke of the pen." But there will be other readers who will be bored, even provoked, by the story, and will wonder wherein lies the Christian value which gained the Christopher approval.

The plot of the book is simple. Jamie McRuin, a dreaming "broth of a boy," inspired by his Fairy Queen, has three wishes to be fulfilled in life. He is to travel, to marry a beautiful woman, and to have a wonderful son "who would have the gift of poetry and speak in the ancient tongue." Together with Owen Tavish, he roisters through a lot of shenanigans which finally lands them in the green hills of Georgia. There he meets and weds his beautiful lady, Maeve Harrigan, daughter of the chief of nomadic horsetraders, wandering through the South. And, finally, at the end of the story, Jamie and Maeve, childless in marriage, adopt the little waif, Number Seven. The lad, a mute from his birth, at a most opportune moment finds himself capable of speaking fluently the

ancient Gaelic tongue. And thus are Jamie's wishes fulfilled.

Within this story are included a series of events largely coincidental, the machinations, too often, of the Little People and Gentle Folk who move in and out, through each page and chapter. For background there is an abundance of fairy lore and Irish superstition. This material, admittedly, O'Neal handles with familiarity and ease, giving to it a note near to credibility.

One quality acceptable to most readers will be the simplicity and winsomeness of the characters. Owen Tavish, after the first chapter, assumes a lovable ness which is, by far the best element in the novel. The relationship between Jamie and Maeve, likewise, is an honest thing and offers a wholesome picture of married love. Little Number Seven, in his early life at the Proddy home, will touch the soft places in one's heart.

But it is the constant mixing of the fantastic with the real which annoys the mature reader and destroys the truth of the story. Most of the motivation for the action develops from Jamie's dreamings, or the superstitious beliefs of others, or from the conspiring of the Little People from the Land of Moo. This mythical and superstitious element is so dominant that the Catholic beliefs and customs seem subordinate and accidental in the lives of the characters. That is why the Christopher award given the book appears inappropriate.

Jude Woerdeman, O.S.B.



Brother Meinrad Helps

When I entered the Sanatorium as a patient I promised Brother Meinrad that if I'd be allowed to go downstairs in six months' time I would send a contribution in his honor. My prayer was granted two days before the six months were up. I have been moved to the first floor and that means I am better and will soon be ready to go home. Enclosed is the promised offering. I will continue to pray to Brother Meinrad.

B.M., Maine.

I am sure it was Brother Meinrad who helped save my life and helped my baby to live long enough to be baptized. Enclosed please find \$1.00 for ten booklets of Brother Meinrad stamps.

Mrs. W.L., Ind.

I promised publication if I would receive help with one of my children. What seemed to be a very serious argument about her association with a married man has had a very happy ending. All thanks to Brother Meinrad. Mrs. C.H.B., Kentucky.

I wish to make public acknowledgement to Brother Meinrad for helping me gain a promotion in the job I obtained through his intercession three months ago. Enclosed is an offering of thanksgiving.

M.S., Texas

Enclosed is a small offering in thanksgiving to Brother Meinrad for answering my prayers. I had a large sum of money loaned out and was badly in need of it. I promised publication if Brother Meinrad would hear my prayers. In less than a week I had my money. Brother Meinrad has helped me on other occasions also.

R.M.L., Kansas.

I wish to thank Brother Meinrad for obtaining work for my daughter and for helping my sister through an illness.

Mrs. M.K., La.

My niece and I wish to express our gratitude to Brother Meinrad. I had hoped against heavy odds to get my niece into a Catholic boarding school. Through Brother Meinrad's intercession this has been successfully accomplished.

B.B.B. and P.G., Ind.

Last month I promised an offering if through Brother Meinrad's help my health would improve. My health is now better for which I am very thankful. Enclosed is the offering.

Mrs. M.J.H., Minn.

Ah! the Press...

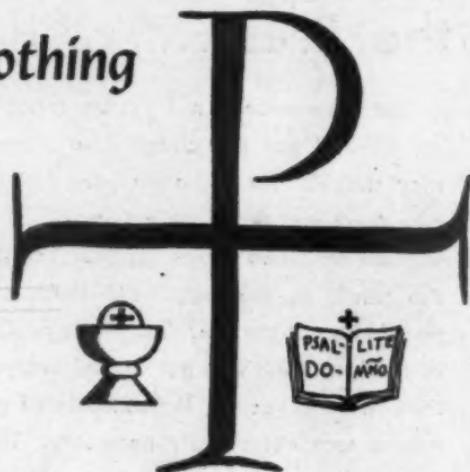
"Its importance is not yet understood. Neither the faithful nor the clergy give it the attention they should. The old sometimes say that it is a new work and that, in the past, souls were saved without troubling oneself about newspapers. In the past! In the past! But these shortsighted people do not consider that, in the past, the poison of the bad press was not spread everywhere, and that, in consequence, the antidote of good newspapers was not equally necessary. The question is not about the past. We are not living in the past; we are living today. Very well, then. It is a fact that, today, the Christian people are deceived, poisoned, and corrupted by impious newspapers. In vain will you build churches, preach missions, found schools; all good works, all your efforts will be destroyed, if you cannot, at the same time, wield the defensive and offensive weapons of a press that is Catholic, loyal, and sincere."

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The Liturgical Press
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Let nothing



*be put before
the Work of God.*

from the Rule of St. Benedict

